Why a ponytail can get you fired

The British designer who took New York



Legal action will overturn EU beef ban

Ministers confident of success

SARAH HELM **COLIN BROWN** and PAUL FIELD

British ministers were confident last night of winning a European Court challenge to lift the worldwide ban on the export of British beef, as senior European Commission officials admitted there was no legal hasis for its

Authoritative sources within the commission have told the Independent that there was no sound legal ground for the world-wide ban and it would most likely be reversed in court. The legal questions were dealt with hastily when the BSE crisis first broke and member states sought to respond to do-

In taking the European Commission to the European Court of Justice, British lawyers plan to quote assurances that British beef is safe by Jacques Santer, the commission president, and Franz Fischler, the commissioner for agriculture, who adbe happy to eat British beef because there was no medical

reason not to. in a statement to the Commons yesferday, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, said the ban was "unjust and unjus-tified". He admitted that substantive legal action could take months; but Britain will be seeking an interim order by the European Court for the immediate lifting of the ban, pending a further court hearing.

Mr Hogg also announced a package of measures to boost market confidence including a £550m scheme, beginning on 29 April, to buy and destroy cattle aged over 30 months. Farmers

each dairy cow at the end of its productive life, known as cull cows. Beef farmers whose heifers and steers come to market after 30 months, which are worth considerably more, are to be compensated under an £80m top-up scheme.

Slaughterhouses are to recieve an immediate £30m designed to keep them affoat. A further £80m is to be used to remove the blockage of unsaleable beef, currently valued at £132m. The Intervention Board will purchase the stocks at 65 per cent of the market price prior to the BSE crisis before taking responsibility for their disposal,

Mr Hogg said latest reports showed beef consumption was now around 85 per cent of precrisis levels and the auction market had recovered to 60 per

Ministers have been holding talks with food chains about resuming British beef sales. The Government ruled out a mass producers said it may not be enough to restore public confi-

Sources within the European Commission told the Independent last night that the han on exporting British beef to third countries was imposed without any clear legal base and would probably be reversed in court. Furthermore, the commission imposed the global section of the ban without citing any relevant treaty article to justify it, and despite strong indications from its own legal experts that the global ban could be im-

"We knew there was no legal basis for telling member states

are to receive up to £500 for what they do with exports of each dairy cow at the end of its beef to third countries," a senior

The admissions will fuel anger in Britain and raise new questions about the way the European Union responded to the BSE crisis. The commission is confident it has clear powers to impose the ban on British beef within the EU, but not to extend it to third countries. However, Franz Fischler, the agriculture commissioner, is certain to continue to insist in public that the commission had the power to enforce a global ban too. Mr Fischler argues that the comprehensive nature of the ban was essential to restore confidence to the markets.

Using diplomatic and legal action, Downing Street said Mr Major also had written to European leaders, including Helmut Kohl of Germany and President Chirac of France, to call for the ban to be lifted, and this week will lobby them for action at an international confer-

ence in Moscow. the all-clear given by Mr Santer and Mr Fishcler made the han "inappropriate". The next meeting of agriculture ministers is not due until 29 April. British ministers may seek an emergency meeting of the agriculture council to lift the han.

The package of help for farmers was welcomed on all sides of the Commons. Mr Hogg said that the Gov-

ernment would not accept the demands of some EU ministers for Britain to carry out a massive culling programme. The numbers selectively culled would be in low tens of thousands, he said.

Aid for farmers, page 2 | Verbier, Switzerland, last Sunday



The Duke and Duchess of York are to divorce after more than two years' separation it was announced last night by lawyers for both sides. Legal proceedings are already under way and

the marriage is expected to be dissolved by the end of May. The first hearing will be held today in the family division of the High Court in London and the divorce will be finalised before the end of May.

The Queen, who has been informed of the couple's decision, was said to be "saddened". But royal-watchers said she was relieved by the announcement which comes just before her 70th birthday on Sunday.

The solicitors for the Prince and the Duchess declined to discuss the terms of the divorce, though they said the Duchess would relinquish the fitle "Her Royal Highness" and will look after their children. Bucking-ham Palace stressed that the Duke and Duchess married in Duke and Duchess, married in 1986 and separated in 1992, re-main "close friends" and were under no pressure from the Royal Family to divorce.

A Palace spokesman denied the Queen had written to the Duke and Duchess in the same anner as she wrote to the Prince and Princess of Wales, calling for an end to the mar-

Financial arrangements between the Duke and Duchess were "entirely a personal matter" and were not being dis-

cussed with the media. Solicitors for the Prince and the Duchess also declined to discuss the terms of the divorce. They issued a joint statement saying: "The Duke and Duchess of York today announced ... that they have agreed, after more than two years' separation, that their marriage should formally be ended. Accordingly the necessary legal proceedings are under way and it is anticipated

Her fourth

birthday may

well be her last,

made at the end of May.

The decision by the Duke and Duchess is a personal one, and theirs alone. Her Royal Highness The Duchess of York has chosen not to use the style Her Royal Highness' and will continue to be the Duchess of York ... The children will continue to live with the Duchess...

The royal divorce is listed for hearing today in the Principal Registry of the High Court Family Division at Somerset House, London.

The case, listed as "HRH The Duke of York v HRH The Duchess of York", is the last in a list of 29 "quickie" special pro-



cedure divorces to be disposed of under the fast track system hefore Senior District Judge Gerald Angel. Barring any objections, decrees nisi will be granted in all 29 petitions "en bloc" after the names of each couple have been read out. It is understood that the

Duchess will continue to live at her rented home, Kingsbourne, at Wentworth. The 36-year-old Duchess is in the middle of a skiing holiday

in Switzerland with her children. A spokeswoman for her said: "There is no further comment." Fame and bad taste, page 3

Girl, 2, beheaded by Israeli missile



An Israeli F-16 pilot returning from a raid on Hizbollah targets in Lebanon yesterday Photograph: Nati Hanik / AP

ROBERT FISK

In its attack on what it claims to be Lebanese Hizbollah targets, Israel yesterday bombed a Palestinian refugee camp at Ein el Helweh and killed two more civilians – a woman who died in an air raid near Baalbek and a two year old girl decapitated by an Israeli missile fired from a helicopter over Beirut.

Their deaths bring to 25 the number of civilians cut down in the Israeli offensive, of whom at least 14 are women and children, the youngest a month old. In southern Lebanon the

Hizbollah fired another 20 Katyusha rockets back at Israel, wounding several civilians. Israel did not give precise figures. The sixth day of Israel's op-

ed to force the Lehanese

bouring house. Osama and Samia Osman were taken to the Hammoud Hospital in Sidon where they were yesterday in critical con-dition with shrapnel wounds to the head and upper body. Dr Ghassan Hammoud, the direceration, which it says is intendtor and owner of the hospital.

tween the PLO and Israel.

Mr Maqda was not hurt, but

his three-year-old son Mazen was reported to be badly injured

and a married couple were

gravely wounded when one of the missiles hit their neigh-

government to disarm the hospital records which show Hizbollah opened before dawn that in the past six days, his doctors have tended 88 wounded when two helicopters flew over the Ein el Helweh camp and civilians. The figure suggests fired two missiles at the house that the official tally of 166 of Mounir Maqda, a Palestinwounded in all Lebanon may be ian official who broke with the a serious underestimate. One of PLO leader because he dis-Mr Maqda's bodyguards was agreed with the Oslo accord bealso reported to have been

A personal decision: A smiling Duchess of York pictured during her skiling holiday in Verbier, Switzerland, last Sunday

Photograph: Amold Slater

wounded in the missile attack the only militia man reported to have been injured during the day. A married couple were also wounded by shell fire in the village of Tibnin. But still not a single Hizbollah guerrilla ap-

pears to have been killed. Two other civilians were wounded when an unnamed woman died in the Israeli air raid at Baalbek which the Israelis said was aimed at a Hizbollah office. They used the same description of the helicopter missile attack on Beirut's gave the Independent a set of southern suburbs which killed

the two year old girl in mid-

afternoon. Yesterday morning, Israel's proxy militia radio station in southern Lehanon hegan threatening civilians in Tyre. warning them to leave their homes if 'terrorists' lived near them and created a miniature version of the mass panic that gripped Tyre at the weekend. By nightfall Sidon's streets were almost empty.

A US proposal aimed at end-ing the fighting seemed to be over almost before it began when Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri said it was difficult for Beirut to accept some of its terms. US Ambassador Richard Jones had called for the revival of a 1993 understanding barring attacks against civilian targets on both sides of the Lehanese-Israeli border as a



She's poor

In countries like the Gambia, one in four children die before their fifth birthday The diseases they suffer from differ But the cause is almost always the same

ACTIONAID is working in some of the poorest areas of the world to end this cycle of despair Helping local communities to provide clean water, education, health, nutrition, lood production and a means to generate their

Sponsor a child like Nyana and you'll be helping her. her family and her whole community A photograph and regular reports keep you in lough. You will receive messages. from the child and can write if you wish.

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IN BRIEF

Ceasefire plot The IRA were stockpiling bombs and making lists of potential targets throughout the

Madonna with child Pop star Madonna is pregnant with her first baby and is "deliriously happy".

Today's weather Mainly bright with scattered showers. Section Two, page 29



Flying pizza that reaches for the stars per acre is treble that of the best cient, and much less expensive, "Rice and potatoes take very latest newly-bred crops is viable,

Science Correspondent

America's future astronauts might travel a long way from home, but at least they'll still be able to get the essentials of earthly eating - pizza, cookies and fresh bread. The key, a 15year project at Utah State University which has succeeded in developing a fast-growing dwarf wheat that NASA, the US space agency, will grow in future

space missions. Called Apogee, the special-ly-bred wheat has been developed specifically to thrive in where astronauts food is prospace. Its yield of 600 bushels duced onboard. It is more effi-

weeks, a week before earthbound rivals. It also produces fewer branches than rivals, so using less energy on growing and more on producing grain. And it is only 18 inches high when mature - an advantage in

the cramped environment of a SDECCCTAFT. Long space missions to Mars and other planets - and perhaps one day to the stars - will call for spacecraft which function as self-contained ecosystems,

of natural strains, and its heads to use the plentiful solar enerjourney, rather than hauling it all the way from Earth. Apogee wheat will be grown on the International Space Sta-

tion, due to be built by 2002, and Bruce Bugbee, professor of plant physiology at Utah State University, is already working on other crops. Tomatoes, rice and soybeans are high up the international list of ingredients in space travellers' onboard farms. And making a pizza would not require a space cow. "You can make vegetarian cheese," Professor Bugbee points out.

little preparation to eat, it's of grain emerge after three gy to grow food during the true," the professor said yesterday. "But the bad news is they only make one product. Whereas without too much extra processing, wheat gives you the basis of noodles, pizza bases, cookies - it's the basis of the food we eat."

An area of Apogee wheat about 30-yards-square would meet one person's needs indefinitely, given the right light conditions, said Professor Bugbee, and harvesting and processing could be automated. An experiment is due to start with-

ple permanently living in space," said Professor Bugbee. Those unable to get that far can still get a taste of Apogee. The University is making free samples available to laboratories and schools worldwide. Those interested can apply via

in which astronauts will live in

a sealed pod in NASA's John-

son Space Centre in their own

space farm. "We could be ready

in the near future to have peo-

post to the USU Crop Physiology Laboratory, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, or by in the next two years to see email to hughee@cc.usu.edu.

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IN BRIEF

Ex-husband held in murder probe

Detectives investigating the riverbank murder of divorcee

Karen Skipper as she walked

her two dogs are questioning

her ex-husband. Philip Skipper.

38, was arrested early yesterday

and taken to Fairwater police

The partially-clothed body of

Mrs Skipper, 34, was found in

the River Ely on 10 March. Her

hands had been tied behind her back with a dog-lead. Tests showed she had been dragged

through brambles and into the

water where she was held under until she drowned. Lion blaze drama

Wardens armed with bigh velocity rifles protected firefighters when a car caught fire in the lion enclosure at Lord Bath's Longleat Safari Park in Wiltshire. Visitors Craig Gor-don and Michelle Sanders. of

Southampton, were pulled from

their vehicle as the wardens kent

12 lions at bay. Keepers received special training after a similar

situation involving another ter-

rified family in the big cats'

Legal ban on leaks

The Department of Trade and

Industry won a High Court

injunction to block further pub-

lication in The Economist of

details from a leaked report

which recommended that

National Power's £2.8bn bid for

Southern Electric and Power-

gen's £1.95bn bid for Midland

Electric be allowed. Judge

Longmore said that information

already in the public domain

could be repeated but no new

information was to be disclosed.

enclosure last year.

station in Cardiff.

to be

Feeling humgrumshious? Perbaps you've just been told you're looking obsocky. Or worse, that you're a pesterous

Those who bail from the West Indies will bave already person wearing ill-matching Oxford University Press.

JASON BENNETTO

The IRA was stockpiling bombs

and making lists of potential tar-

gets on the British mainland throughout the last ceasefire, it

for a terror campaign, which took place while President Bill

Clinton was on a peace mission

to the United Kingdom and

Dublin, were revealed at the in-

quest on Edward O'Brien, the

terrorist who blew himself up on

It is believed the information

about O'Brien's terrorist activ-

ities was found in documents re-

covered from his flat in south

O'Brien, 21, died on 18 Feb-

ruary when the 5lh Semtex

bomb he was carrying went off

At yesterday's inquest at

Westminster Coroner's Court,

in which a verdict of accidental

deaths was recorded. Detective

Superintendent William Emer-

ton of Scotland Yard's Anti Ter-

rorist Branch said O'Brien was

working for the IRA on the

British mainland as early as Au-

Police raided O'Brien's flat

immediately after the blast and

found 33lb of Semtex, 20 timers,

four detonators, an incendiary

device and ammunition for a

9mm handgun which be was car-

Sir Patrick Mayhew, Northern

Ireland Secretary, yesterday

used publication of a bill for the

province's forthcoming elec-

restoration of the IRA ceasefire

to ensure all-party talks go

The Government is rushing

through the bill, which will pro-

vide for elections on 30 May, in

the hope of ensuring Royal As-

ahead on June 10.

DONALD MACINTYRE

accidentally at the Aldwych,

a hus in central London.

east London.

gust 1994.

Details of the preparations don.

was disclosed yesterday.

clothes, denounced as an irritating tramp.

Those who don't, but like to have a plaster for every sore (an answer for everything) might like to consult the first ever dictionary of West Indian words and phrases - the latest dictioidentified a rough and crude nary to be published by the

IRA bomber

'had hit-list'

rying when he died. They are

also recovered documents nut-

lining potential future targets.

complete find of bomb-making

equipment which could have

sustained a significant bombing

attack on the citizens of Lon-

1994 O'Brien was in London operating on hehalf of the IRA

and indulging in criminal ac-

tivity. I can prove that in Octo-

her and November 1995 he

mation and assembling his

bomb-making equipment in his

flat, clearly intent on carrying

out the intentions of the Provi-

certain that O'Brien was also re-

sponsible for a planting a Sem-tex bomb on 15 February in a

telephone box in central Lou-

don, which was later deactivat-

ed by the police. An identical

sports bag and similar bomb

making equipment was found at

O'Brien's flat. The inquest

beard details of the blast that

Pathologist Dr Iain West said

ripped apart the No 171 bus.

O'Brien, from Gorey, County

Wexford, was killed "virtually in-

stantaneously" by massive in-

juries caused by the explosion

- his legs were blown off, he was

peppered with shrapnel, and the

force of the detonation ripped

Mayhew pressure on IRA

it clear Sinn Fein's participation

in the all-party talks depends on "unequivocal" restoration of

the truce. Sir Patrick yesterday

dismissed suggestions that he had accepted that a de facto

ceasefire already existed and

made it clear that the Govern-

his lungs to tatters. Forensic and get out of the bus.

negotiators will be chosen by Patrick said: "It would be in-

party leaders, was a "gateway to negotiations that can lead to-

wards a long-term political set- equivocal and genuine, the

tlement in Northern Ireland". nearer to the off it was de-

The Government has made livered." His remarks were re-

The police are also almost

sional IRA."

was collecting targeting infor-

"I can prove that from August

Mr Emerton said: "It was a

English Usage claims to be the first attempt in 400 years to translate some of the more flamboyant West Indian expressions. Among the 20,000 words explained are puss boots (soft-soled sboes), nimbles

(fleas) and the Caribbean

equivalent of shanks's pony - to

pathological evidence suggest-ed that the bomb was being car-

ried in a hag at knee height as

O'Brien stood at the bottom of

the stairs of the double-decker

Allen Feraday, a forensic sci-

entist, said he could not say ex-

actly why the bomb went off

early, but said the most likely

reasons included poor training, bad construction, and electrical

acts of bravery and lucky es-capes. Pc Miles Manning, who

was off-duty when the bomh went off, belped the two pas-

sengers and driver injured in the

blast. He recalled: "I saw the bus

and it looked like there was a

huge hite mark where the door

should have heen. Lying in this hite mark was a white male who

was still alive and murmuring.

"Then I looked up and saw the

deceased. It was obvious he was

dead. His legs bad been blown

who was on the bus and escaped

with a few cuts and a perforat-

ed eardrum, told the inquest:

There was a piercing sound go-

ing through my mind. Every-

thing became still and suddenly

I was surrounded by complete

darkness with sparks of light. "I

was losing consciousness, but I

forced myself to stand up and

inforced by the Deputy Prime

Minister, Michael Heseltine.

who said on a visit to Northern

Ireland that the ceasefire

should be reinstated as soon as

possible. "It is a tragedy it was

interrupted; I hope it was only

an interruption."
People in the province bad

"suffered appallingly" and bad felt a deep sense of relief when

the ceasefire was called. Every-

one hoped the violence was be-

Paris Valentine, a solicitor,

The inquest was also told of

or mechanical faults.

People may he described as foodist (greedy), rang-a-tang (belligerent) or spree boy (someone who wants to bave fun). They might be sprankious (lively and good looking), sometimish (moody and unreliable) or trickified (cunning and en and kiddie kingdom" (in a

cally described as a sport girl. while a gay man is variously described as an auntic man, antiman or pantyman - expressions that are likely to leave neither of them in "goat beav-

The Dictionary of Caribbean take taxi 11 (from the legs 11 crafty), kicksy (lively) or simply state of bliss). The dictionary, priced at £50, has been compared to be single to be be seen compared to the first attention of the compared to the first attention of the compared to the first attention of the compared to th Allsop. 73, who recently retired as reader in English Language and linguistics at the Universi-

ty of the West Indies. A spokesman for the Oxford University Press said: "This is an inventory of the linguistic of standard English."

environment and life-style of the English-speaking Caribbean

Speaking from his Barbados home, Mr Allsop said: "The book is an attempt to collect 400 years of ecology, history and culture of the Caribbean. It is not meant to replace any dictionary

He said the demonstration. mounted by the Movement for Justice after the State Opening protest at the Government's Asylum and Immigration Bill, had clearly been planned and bad left both Dr Mawhinney and his wife distressed.

ment and walked across nearby College Green on their way to an interview at a temporary BBC television studio. Their actions were captured

Allowing the defendants bail until 14 May when he will pass sentence, Mr Evans warned them that they each faced the

risk of being jailed. Karen Doyle, 19, of Camden; Naveed Malik, 18, of Clapton;

Marco, 29, of Clapton, east London, was cleared of all three charges. The former philosopby and history student, was president of the students' union at Kingsway College, Camden, north London, until be was expelled earlier this year.

Dr Mawhinney had to run a

diary magistrate at Bow Street magistrates' court in London, told the three students and a college lecturer that "no rational person" could accept their argument that their actions were designed to prevent the Cabinet minister from breaking the law by inciting racial hatred.

Mawhinney and his wife as they left the Houses of Parlia-

and flour was hurled at Dr

strators were found guilty yes-terday of common assault and threatening behaviour by throwing paint and flour over Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman.

gauntlet of placard-waving demonstrators, chanting "racist, racist" as he arrived and left the heavily policed court building.

selling-off the railways "when

among the public is underlined

by an ICM poll for today's Guardian, which suggests 43 per cent think services will be "less

safe" when the railways are

fully privatised, 47 per cent think they will be "worse" and 79 per cent think they will be

Meanwhile, the Save Our

Railways campaign went to the High Court in London yester-

more expensive".



A barrage of plastic bags

on television film, which was shown to the court.

Amanda Egbe, 20, of Stoke Newington and Anthony Gard, 54, a teacher from Brockley, all in London, were convicted of one charge of common assault against Dr Mawhinney, a similar offence against his wife Betty, and a general allegation of using threatening behaviour.

. Nicholas Evans, the stipenof Parliament last November in

Double tragedy A mother lost her baby to sus-

pected meningitis bours after her son died from hit-and-run injuries. Angela Bretherton. 26, was at her four-year-old son Jamie's bedside in Liverpool's Alder Hey Children's Hospital when eight-week-old Anthony was taken ill. Paramedics rushed to the family home in Toxteth hut attempts to revive him failed. Jamie was hit by a BMW on a pedestrian crossing and died from his injuries. Mrs Bretherton, who bas two other children, is under sedation.

Such sweet sorrow

Receivers have been called in at Meltis plc, best known as the makers of New Berry Fruits. Accountancy firm KPMG warned they could not be optimistic ahout saving the company. which employs 310 staff at a factory in Bedford making New Berry Fruits, crystallised fruit James, one of the two receivers, said: "Meltis is clearly a famous and evocative name - I gave my mother boxes of New Berry Fruits on special occasions."

Royal pay rises

Unions representing 600 members of the Queen's staff are to press for basic pay increases of 2.9 per cent. A handful of senior staff will also receive performance-related rises which would take their total increase to almost seven per cent. But most workers, including gar-deners, porters, clerical staff and chambermaids, would receive considerably less, according to union officials. Talks will be beld later this month before a deal abstain, let alone go into the of pounds" were being spent on hackdated to 1 April.

Plane nightmare

the vast majority of people A panicking passenger forced a pilot to land his plane in a field would like to see that money spent on improving it as a puhand then jumped out - straight Mr Major said previous into the spinning propeller blades. The 43-year-old man is Labour governments had closed critical after emergency surgery at the North Hampshire Hospital following the incident in a field near Hannington. His arm was almost torn from its sockmore than 600 stations while the Tories had opened more than Under Labour, fares bad risen by more than 20 per cent while the Government had et and he suffered serious spine, pegged fare rises to inflation and fares would drop later. head and neck injuries after leaping from the three-seater Opposition to the self-off single engine Cheetah.

Radio cliffhanger

Fans of The Archers radio soap were left on the edge of their seats after a technical fault interrupted transmission of a cru-cial episode. Listeners will have to wait until Sunday to hear the outcome. The episode centred on a family argument over funeral arrangements for the character Guy Pemberton.

day to seeking leave for a judi-cial review of the franchising process over the refusal by the franchising director, Roger THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD Salmon, to allow British Rail to hid for the London, Tilbury and Carraries ... Pts300 Madeira ... Esc325 CyprusC£1.20 Matte43 cent Denmark Dkr18 Norwey Nor20 France Fr14 Spain Pis300 Germany DM4.5 Sweden. ... Sic20 Greece Dr450 Suitzerland . Str4.00 He took the unusual step of LINEARTHOUNG ... LEGO USA \$3.00

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MACK ISSUES



NORTHWEST KLM

One-seat majority on the line

JOHN RENTOUL Political Correspondent

The Government's one-seat Commons majority will be put to the test tonight, in a vote on a Labour motion calling for the withdrawal of plans to privatise

As Clifford Forsythe, the Ul-ster Unionists transport spokesman, signalled that his party's nine MPs were hostile to privatisation, the Northern Ire-land Office moved to reassure them that there was "no truth" in reports that railways in the province would be sold. With all the other minor par-

ties also upposed to the controversial privatisation, tonight's vote could turn on the loyalty of just one Conservative MP. Mr Forsythe, MP for South

Antrim, warned that the railways must remain an integrated public service. He said: "Rather than baving a disjointed system, the roads and railways in the whole of the UK all should fall into one plan. Essential rail links should be retained as a public service rather than simply on whether they are

John Prescott, Labour's deputy

leader, last night lodged an of-

ficial complaint against pho-

tographs of himself being doctored to make him look

like a "champagne socialist".

The true picture of Mr

a party showed that there were seem, I believe it is disgraceful

bottles of Becks beer on their and unacceptable that a news-

Prescott and his wife Pauline at

COLIN BROWN

land had an interest in Railtrack, because of the importance of the West Coast line from London to ferry points un the Irish Sea.

But the Northern Ireland Office statement faxed yesterday to Unionist MPs appeared to satisfy their concerns about the future of Northern Ireland

The statement repeated the Government's commitment to Ashford, said he was in close a programme of maximising private sector expertise through market testing and contracting out, but said there was "no current timetable for yesterday: "I would be very

islation would be required for privatisation in the province. With the voting intentions of the Ulster Unionists still unclear last night, potential Tory rehels

Northern Ireland". Fresh leg-

denied that they would break ranks. A Tory party spokesman said he was confident of a gov-

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, upped the stakes in the Commons yesterday, when he raised the sale issue at Prime Minister's Question Time. He asked if one reason for the Tory defeat in last week's

ernment majority of about 20. Sir Keith Speed, the MP for touch with the half-dozen Tories who lobbied Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, just before Christmas. He said

Staffordshire South East byelection was not that "people

don't want to see their railway system hroken into a 100 different companies, sold on the out of the taxpayers' money? privatising public transport in surprised if any of them would He said "hundreds of millions

Ulster rail part of integrated system

Northern Ireland Railways only has 206 route miles, much of it single track, which is why little attention has been paid to its fate, until today's rail debate, writes Christian Wolmar. In a series of Parliamentary an-

privatising the non-core activ-

table, not champagne bottles.

appeared in the London

Evening Standard, one bottle of

beer by Mr Prescott's hand had been airbrushed out of the pic-

ture. Another had been cropped

so that it appeared to be the

"However harmless this may

neck of a champagne bottle.

But in the photograph that

swers earlier this year, Junior Northern Ireland minister Malcolm Moss admitted that the Government was looking at

acquisitive bus company, has had two meetings with ministers over plans to take over the service, the Government denied there were any firm plans for a takeover.

Northern Ireland benefits from an integrated transport policy that would not be allowed by Tory dogma in Great Britain, A single company, Northern Ire-land Transport Huldings, owns ities Although Stagecoach, the both the railways and the two

paper should doctor pictures in this way." Mr Prescott said.

newspapers in the former Sovi-

ct Union to remove Soviet lead-

ers who were no longer in favour

in the Politburo. But it is prob-

ably the first time a beer bottle

It came after the press seized

on Mr Prescott's comments last

week that he was "middle class"

has been removed this way.

Airbrushing was often used by

main bus companies, Ulsterbus and Citybus and therefore runs the services in co-operation with each other. The lines receive a subsidy of

Opposition lobby on Wednes-

£7.3m, but this amount is de-

clining each year, which is why privatisation is seen as a longterm option. The sale would be fiercely apposed by Ulster Unionists through fear that the lines would eventually be

because be earned £34,000 as an

Prescott, the Beck's beer socialist

MP. Under the headline "Aye issuing a statement to demand lad, I'm right middle class, me", a full apology for the slip up over the beer as part of Labour's "rethe Standard said Mr Prescott had handed Tony Blair's New huttal" policy in the run-up to Labour the ultimate endorsethe general election. He said: ment by admitting be was "The standards of the Tory middle class. press in the run-up to the elec-Beneath the photograph, showing Mr Prescott in a dintion are bound to be an issue if this kind of thing goes on and ner jacket, was a caption saying we intend to draw attention to "cbampagne socialist". such malpractice at every turn."

'She had exorbitant bad taste, a voracious appetite for publicity, and swallowed up large amounts of money'

She launched herself as the Duchess of laughter who would cast a modern ray of sunshine on the royal family. A decade on no one better epitomises their decline than Fergie and her legacy of lewd behaviour, miserable debts and public dis-

So what went wrong for the once great hope of the Windsors? There are so many moments that might be held up as the turning point from the 'toesucking to the plight of her cartoon character Budgie the Helicopter, to the recent revelation that she owes £3m, that it is almost impossible to recall the Duchess' heyday.

According to her critics the signs were there from the very start, when she married Prince Andrew at Westminster Ahbey in 1986. As she turned round, not to face the cheering crowds with a regal smile, but to tic a teddy bear to the back of their horse-driven honeymoon carriage bearing the couple off into their short-lived sunset, they

Richard Barber, editor of OK magazine which is the rival of Fergie's great friend Hello!. said: "From that moment we knew we were in trouble and it was all going to go wrong. It was a question of there's a good sport and then there's Fergie,"

For those who were anxious to see the royal family pulled into modern life, Sarah Ferguson, a thoroughly modern royal who had wurked for a living in publishing, had a series of previous boyfriends and openly struggled with her weight, seemed the ideal antidote. The public was willing to at least give her grinning and hearty style a

For many she symbolised the two conflicting world's of the royals, at once anxious to retain their dignity, but also eager to he seen to be relevant and up

It was when Fergie came under the fiercest fire from the oldstyle establishment that she was often at her best, not least when the usually supremely gentle Lord Charteris said of her: "She is simply a vulgarian. She is vulgar, vulgar, vulgar, and that is that." Instead of retaliating the Duchess responded with dignity by responding she had always thought he was a very nice man.

San Fred Market

.~ : 🚓 rises

However, it was a rare moment of wisdom in an otherwise chequered career as a leading player in the royal drama, constantly dogged by irritating follies, from entering into a food fight with hread rolls during a flight with her father, Major Ron Ferguson.

The most disturbing concern for the royals must have been the gradual realisation that Fergie was only playing at being a royal, in the same way that she royal, in the same way the same

played at being a chalet girl, a publisher, an author. The only thing she appeared to remain constant to was her love of going on holiday and, to her credit, her two daughters Eugenie and Beatrice.

When Fergie became the first royal to open her doors to Hetto!, in an unprecedented step that showed her and her family in casual mode, it was clear she was lapping up the limelight. They posed in their modern palace, the newly-huilt Sunningdale that resembled an out-of-town Tescos, and invited the public in to see how normal they were.
Fergie was not normal. The

truth was there for all to see. She had exorbitantly expensive bad taste, a voracious appetite for publicity, and swallowed up arge amounts of money, but unlike the rest of the Windsors she did not even have a hirth-right.

If there was a turning point in her own image, it was the long-lens shot of Fergie in the South of France, having her toe sucked by her 'financial adviser', John Bryan, following her separation from Prince Andrew in 1992. Her remaining credibility nose-dived.

Although it was clear from the early high jinx of the Duchess of York that she was a potential time bomh for the royals, few could have anticipated the absurd depths to which the 'toe sucking' incident would hring them down. With so many other catastrophes in the wings with the Prince and Princess of Wales, it was nothing short of a disaster.

The Duchess remained tenacious in her determination to retain a place in royal life. She continued to campaign for her children's charity, albeit with the coffers empty, and she continued to appear in Hello! constantly reinventing herself with

Even in Fergie's darkest hour her most loyal followers believed she might be ressurected as a main player in the royal saga. However, her behaviour has continued to heap yet more embarrassment on the family she married into. The Duchess had a series of

arguments with her staff, and two aides left her, prompting speculation that while her status has sunk her behaviour has become more demaning and erratic. Her pursuil of Thomas Muster, the tennis star, around the world, has also caused hlushes on her behalf.

Perhaps the saddest image of the Duchess of York was her latest reinvention in Hello!, a pale, emaciated shadow of

Like the very first vulgarian, Thersites in the Hiad, a soldier who dares to talk back to his hetters, she has received a mothers, who themselves re-









Running Into trouble: Fergie and the infamous It's A Knockout

'roubled future for Beatrice and Eugenie

field for lawyers negutiating the Yorks' divorce.

Exile of the Duchess from court circles could mean the Queen seeing less of the children, who are fifth and sixth in line to the throne. Previous royal divorces have ended with mained within the Royal Family. But while Princess Margaret and the Princess Royal are the

The future of the young princesses, Beatrice and Eugenie, will have been a legal minesix, are expected to continue living with their mother, seeing their father only when he is on leave from naval duties. The Duke, a senior pilot, is believed to have taken a shore job in an attempt to save his marriage. But responsibility for two

Since March 1992, when the Palace announced that the Yorks were discussing a separation, the

mother from Sunninghill Park, Berkshire, and lost their normal family relationship with their father. In August 1993, they lost their nannies, Alison Wardley and Sally Fish, who had been with the Duchess since Princess Beatrice was born. Marriages of couples with small children break up every

terwards they moved with their

day, but rarely with a worldwide blaze of publicity compounding their isolation and sense of

daily lives of the girls have been abandonment. The strain on turned upside down. Soon afclear. There have been times when they have thrown tantrums - and even tableware at other diners in a hotel restaurant. Zelda West-Meads, of the

counselling service Relate -whose patron is the Princess of Wales - said: "Kids whose parents are being divorced oflen regress to a younger age, thumb-sucking and bed-wetting. These children suffer a tot of pain and damage. Their lives

Goodbye to all that ... and Hello! to divorce

23 July 1986: Prince Andrew and Sarah "Fergie" Ferguson marry at Westminster Abbey. August 1988: First daughter Beatrice is born. The Duchess is much criticised after flying out to Australia to visit the Duke, leaving her daughter hehind. 23 March 1990: Second daughter, Eugenie, is born. May 1990: Texan oilman Steve

Wyatt flies the Duchess and Beatrice in his private jet to Morocco for a holiday. October 1990: The couple move into their new, and much criticised, £5m home at Sunninghill

Park, Windsor. November 1991: Cleaner Maurice Maple finds photographs of the Duchess of York and Princess Beatrice on holiday at Steve Wyatt's flat in Cadogan Square, London.

March 1992: Buckingham Palace announces that the Yorks are discussing a separation.

August 1992: A paparazzi takes sneak pictures of the Duchess with John Bryan, a "financial adviser kissing her insten as she sunbathes topless at a villa in St Tropez, in the south of France. March 1993: Duchess tells Harpers and Queen magazine: "I want out of the whole thing so I can get on with my life and stop being hlamed for everything ... I have been the scapegoat of the Walcses for the past four years."

July 1993: Duchess's hopes of becoming a goodwill ambas-sador for the United Nations are dashed.

October 1993: Duchess turns down ber invitation to Lord Linley's wedding as insiders claim that she no longer feels part of the Royal Family.

9 December 1994: Divorce first raised by the Duchess at a charity Christmas party for motor neuron disease sufferers. January 1996: Years of profligate spending leave her with debts estimated at around £3m. The Queen refuses to bail her out after previously giving gen-erous financial help from the

royal coffers.

January 1996: Duchess is banned from using the Queen's palace mail service free of charge and is also grounded from using Royal Squadron

March 1996: Ghostlike photographs of a heavily made-up Duchess appear plastered all over Hello! magazine. April 1996: Austrian tennis star Thomas Muster denies that he



The ghostlike face on

is having an affair with the Duchess and says he hopes she will patch things up with her estranged husband. 16 April 1996: Divorce between Duke and Duchess of York is

RAGE TAKEAWAYS CONSERVATORIES ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVERY ES GARAGE SERVICES FLORISTS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VEHIC BODY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLICITO ILE TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINICS

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Airport homes scheme 'threatens Domesday Book villages' NICHOLAS SCHOON Environment Correspondent Several villages listed in the Domesday Book could face bitteration if plans go ahead for NICHOLAS SCHOON Environment Correspondent Several villages listed in the Domesday Book could face bitteration if plans go ahead for NICHOLAS SCHOON Environment Correspondent Several villages listed in the Domesday Book could face plane to these communities perhaps since Roman times of Mountflichtet (400), which was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposals he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposal he of the conservation association was mainly in the parish of Birchanger, and Takeley (825) The proposal he of the conservation association was

obliteration if plans go ahead for thousands of new homes to meet the needs of Britain's fastest-growing airport, the High Court was told yesterday. The development at Stanst-

He was appearing oo behalf of Felsted, Takeley. Birchanger and Little Dunmow parish councils and a local conservacontroversial issue of making tion group which have banded together in an attempt to save the right provision for the air-

to serve Stansted. They also wanted a second public inquiry into the highly-

now stood, provision had been made for 2.500 new homes for airport staff to be spread over four locations - Felsted, with a population of 650; Great Dun-

pact of those proposals on the four rural communities cannot be overstated. They will have the gravest consequences in social, economic, educational,

Yet the people most directly affected, the residents of the four parishes and the communities themselves, had been unlawfully denied the oppor-

tions to mount the court challenge. Mr Steele said the scale of the development relative to the size of the existing communities was "immense".

wanted the district plan to be overturned and another one held because "the first one was

seriously flawed".

Brewers tighten code on 'alcopop' marketing

REBECCA FOWLER

Britain's seven largest brewers and distillers have widened their code of conduct on under-age drinking in an attempt to ensure alcohol is not marketed in a way that is appealing to children. The move comes amid claims that up to 17 per cent of 11- to 15-yearolds drink regularly.

The code follows concern

prompted earlier this year over the sale alcoholic versions of fruit-flavoured soft drinks known as "alcopops", including lemonade, which were deemed particularly appealing to the under-18s, and it extends the existing guidelines to cover all alcoholic drinks.

The Portman Group, the alcohol policy institute sponsored by the drinks industry which published the code, has called for a ban on any marketing that would appeal specifically to the under-18s. It also urges alcoholic drinks to be sold in bottles not cans to avoid confusion.

Dr John Rae, director of the Portman Group, said: "We are determined to see that alcoholic drinks are clearly aimed at an adult market. If reasonable people think the drinks are aimed primarily at young people nnder 18, the code has been hroken." Despite the concern over alcopops, when under-18s attempt to purchase alcohol their first choice is either cider or beer, according to research commissioned by the Portman of 10 shopkeepers said underage purchasing had not increased since the fruit-flavoured drinks came on the market.

paigners of not going far enough to protect children with the code, which is valued to the characteristic in London.

Four meo deny evading beer and wine duty, while 10 others have admitted the characteristic in London. But the group had been acthe code, which is voluntary. They have called for stricter enforcement of licensing laws, and "test purchase" of alcohol

schemes at supermarkets and off-licences which would allow the police to work with young

Alcohol Concern, which campaigns against alcohol misuse, found that recent research showed 17 per cent of 11- to 15year-olds admitted drinking regularly in 1994, before alcopops hit the market, compared with 13 per cent in 1990.

Eric Appleby, director of Alcohol Concern, said: "If the new code is to be anything more than a cosmetic public relations exercise, it must have more teeth and be rigorously monitored by an independent agency rather than the drinks trade itself."

He added: "There is no doubt that alcopops, with their sweet taste masking high alcohol contents, are attracting under-age drinkers, and that is something we cannot risk at a time when teenage drinking is on the increase.

A gang known as "The smuggled millions of pounds' worth of bootleg beer and wine into the UK for sale in cash and carry stores, a jury heard yesterday. Under the leadership of a

man code-named Gaddafi, the operation involved 50 hired vans and several seven-too lorries, Maidstone Crown Court in Kent was told. Working from a rented house

and builder's yard in Deal, Kent, up to four vans would make twice daily trips across the Channel to huy beer and wine from hypermarkets in Calais. The vans, "loaded to the

gunwales", would then return to Deal. The drink would eventually be distributed in London.

men were arrested in Decem-ber 1994 after a Customs surveillance operation. The trial continues.



Hive of activity: The Ponte Vecchio in Florence with its shops and businesses could be a guide to how a habitable "Londoners' bridge' could operate

Gummer outlines vision of bridge to unite Londonders

ROS WYNNE-JONES

A competition to design a habitable "Londoners' hridge", alive with housing and commerce, was launched yesterday by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment. The proposed hridge, for

which the competition organisers hope to gain commercial backing, is to span the River Thames from Temple Gardens, near Covent Garden, on the north hank to the London Weekend Television huilding near the South Bank Centre.

Designs, which are to be submitted by a shortlist of architects, will form the centre-Royal Academy of Arts in September. Sponsored by the Cor-poration of London, the exhibition will feature a river meandering through the main gallery at Burlington House, Piccadilly, spanned by models of historic and futuristic bridges.

Contemporary proposals for bridges across the Thames will also be represented, including Will Alsop's design of a home for the Institute of Contempo-rary Arts (ICA) at Blackfriars



of a housing scheme between St Paul's Cathedral and Bankside.

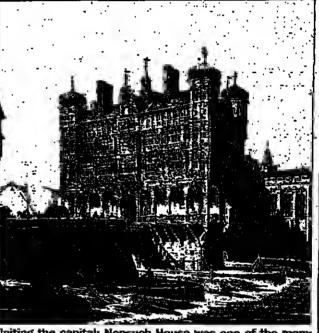
Mr Gummer, who is also minister for London, said the concept of a habitable bridge in the capital harked back to the old London Bridge, which was stacked with houses and businesses and "on which people felt themselves to be a part of this great city". The minister said the purpose of a bridge should be to join, and not divide, London.

He added: "It is well-known

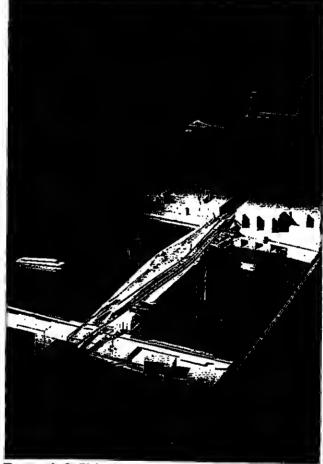
that I wish to see the River Thames, one of our most unsung assets, playing a greater role in the life of London. This would be a bridge of confidence on which people would work, shop and live on the river itself."

The competition; sponsored by Thames Water, is a joint project hetween the Pompidou Centre in Paris and the Royal Academy. Jean Dethier, of the Pompidou Centre, whose re-search into habitable bridges inspired the project, said: "We are interested in the interdisciplinary approach of modern art and architecture and its ability to connect history with the preoon-segregational concept with a strong civic link."

Entries include the German architect Daniel Liebskind and two British firms, Future Systems and Branson Coates. The exhibition is being designed by Nigel Coates, professor of ar-chitectural design at the Royal College of Art. Mr Coates said he was planning to run a river through the gallery just below eye level, so that visitors could see into the designs.



Uniting the capital: Nonsuch House was one of the many sent and the future. We are in-houses and business which straddled the old London Bridge



Bridging the city. Two of the contemporary ideas for the contest to build a bridge across the Thames. Left: Richard Hordern and Associates' proposal for the Gallery Bridge at Bankside and (right) Will Alsop's design which would provide a home for the Institute of Contemporary Arts next to Blackfriars

What's the connection between Newton and Great Falls?

and rich richer'

A quarter of the population -13 to 14 million people – live oo less than half the average income, the Child Poverty Action Group said yesterday, writes

The figure is more than double the number in 1979: one in three children is growing up in poverty, while living standards of the poor and affluent are "marching in opposite directions" the pressure group said in the latest edition of its handbook, Poverty: The Facts.

From 1979 to 1992/3, the real income, after housing costs, of the poorest tenth fell by 18 per cent, while the richest tenth enjoyed a "staggering" 61-per-cent increase. Britain saw a sharper rise in inequality thao any developed country except New Zealand.

Far from wealth trickling down from the rich to the poor, figures from Economic Trends show household income has filtered up from the poorest sections of society to the richer ones, the CPAG said.

Even after redistribution by taxes and benefits, the poorest fifth saw their share fall from 9.5 per cent in 1979 to 6.6 per cent. while the share of the richest fifth has gone from 37 per cent to 44 per cent.

The report calls for fairer tax-atioo, including a more progressive structure, to improve benefits for the poor, warning that policies which encourage privatisation of parts of Social Security and the means-testing of much of the remainder would "result in a general reluctance

'Poor are poorer | Donegal farmers lose 800 sheep to two rogue collies

ALAN MURDOCH

Irish sheep farmers are demanding belicopter support in attempts to track down two rogue collies with a taste for spring lamb, which are being blamed for killing up to 800 Dooegal sheep.
Aerial surveillance is needed

because ground searches of the Glencolumbkille area by dozens of farmers have failed to detect which local forest plantation the dogs are operating from. Marksmen from England and Northern Ireland have attempted to halt the slaughter by shooting the dogs, but without success

The 42 affected farmers, who have formed their own watches to guard against renewed attacks, are convinced from the frequency of the attacks that the out. At the moment most of the sheep are down off the hills for

animals are living wild.

They are hiding in forestry and it is very difficult to get them", said Christopher O'Connor, local representative of the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA). "In other cases, where [domestic dogs] were returning home after attacks it was a bit easier to control them."

The dogs, apparently pets gooe wild, began their killing spree in the peninsula west of Killybegs and Ardara last November. Many more sheep have been attacked or gone missing than have actually been eaten.

Mr O'Connor said with the almost daily killing the situation is hecoming more urgent. "When they get a taste for it, their most savage instincts come sheep are down off the hills for lambing. But the farmers are running out of grass there, and want them back on the hills, so they are very anxious that the

dogs are caught."
Farming sources say the problem is particularly acute in Spring with the birth of new season's lambs. Pastures filled with heavily-pregnant ewes or new-ly-born lambs provide an irresistible temptation to canine predators.

The economic consequences of attacks at this time of year for farmers are serious, the IFA stresses: "Killing of young lambs means the cash crop for the year is destroyed." Poor land quality means sheep and forestry are the only viable farming activities in the area.

Alibi for assault takes court by surprise

A leading churchman accused of indecently assaulting a 17-year-old girl in his home was elsewhere when the offence was meant to have taken place.

a court heard yesterday.

A special defence of alibi was entered for Professor Donald Macleod of the Free Church of Scotland, against the charge of

The 55-year-old professor. who lectures in systematic theology at the Free Church of Scotland College in Edinburgh. denies a total of six charges of indecent assault involving five women which allegedly took place between 1985 and 1993.

Edinburgh Sheriff Court earlier heard a woman, who is now 28, describe how Professor Macleod assaulted her in his study in the last week of July 1985. But yesterday Andrew Hardie QC, defending, said that his client had been out of Edinhurgh from 23 July 1985. He had been in Stornaway, in the Western Isles, with his wife and two of his sons and had not returned until 2 August.

The defence lawyer made a . motion asking for a special defence alibi to be accepted by the court. He said that although such a defence should have been intimated before the first witness in the case gave evideoce, there were special circumstances in this case because it was only under crossexaminatioo that the witness had given a definite date for her complaint.

He pointed out that in the charge, the Crown said that the offence had taken place beand he criticised the Crown for not getting a definite date from the witness when they were preparing her for the trial.

The depute procurator-fiscal, Margaret Graham, for the prosecution, said it was too late to accept such a defence. But Sheriff John Horsburgh QC, granted the motion saying he was doing so "in the interests of justice". He added: "It appears to me that no fault can be laid at the door of the accused or those acting on his behalf for the situation". He said it was "un-fortunate" that the Crown had not obtained a date for the charge before the trial.

The witness, who was the first in the case to have completed her evidence, may now be recalled.

Later yesterday, a 35-year-old lecturer in statistics gave evidence, denying that she was part of a conspiracy among members of the Free Church of Scotland to discredit Professor Macleod.

The woman, who claims that she was indecently assaulted by the professor on two occasions, told Ms Graham: "I have been willing to say what happened to me. I have not been part of a group of conspirators.

The witness also said that she had not previously heard of the Dorcas fund which was referred to in court on Monday by Mr Hardie, who said it had been set up to raise money to get people to give evidence against Professor Macleod. The witness said that only the Crown was paying her expenses to appearing court.

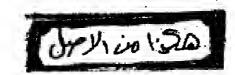
She added that "in an ideal world" the matter would not have come to court. But she had come to court because she was ware there were "patterns of behaviour" and she feared that Professor Macleod could assault

another woman.

A third woman who has accused Professor Macleod of indecently assaulting her later confirmed to the court that a private fund had paid for her to travel from her home in Australia to The State of the S tralia to give evidence. The 36-year-old had her ticket paid for her by the Dorcas fund after the Crown refused to meet the bill

for her expenses. lu court Mr Hardie produced a document which asked for contributions to meet the £1,500 cost of bringing over from Australia a woman who had complained about Professor Macleod. Any extra money raised would go to charity, the document said.

The trial continues today.



FRAN ABRAMS and JUDITH JUDD

Vouchers designed to expand private nurseries at the expense of state schools may have the opposite effect, campaigners said last night.

State primary schools are pressurising parents to withdraw their children from private nurseries and instead to hring them to reception classes at the age

Parents of four-year-olds in Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth and Norfolk have been given £1,100 vouchers which can be exchanged for a place at a private school, a state school, or at a

The scheme, one of the Prime Minister's favoured projects, is due to be introduced nationally in April 1997. But it now looks likely to cause embar-rassment to the Government as Conservative local authorities fight back with aggressive publicity campaigns aimed at keeping children in the state sector. Wandsworth has spent £3,000

on advertising its services. n advertising its services. battle as a result of the vouch- have nothing to fear. There is Instead of giving extra mus- cr scheme, and it's a battle no need for hlackmail."

cle to the private sector the that doesn't need to happen," scheme looks likely to weaken the sector's position, with parents being forced to move their ehildren into state schools to secure their places.

The voucher scheme was designed to lead to the setting up of new private nurseries, but most of the expansion will probably be in primary school re-ception classes. In Norfolk the Government has paid for 16 ocal authority nursery units.

Yesterday the Department for Education and Employment said it was too early to say whether any new private nurseries had been opened as a result of the scheme.

Experts say that a reception class is no substitute for nursery education, which must have a qualified teacher for every 13 pupils while there is no limit on Susan Hay, owner of a string

of private nursery schools and ehair of the Childcare Association, said that the Government had forced unwelcome competition on to schools.

"We have been pushed into battle as a result of the vouch-



'Copycat' cancer therapy goes on trial

LIZ HUNT

Clinical trials have begun on a new approach to treating can-cer, using "copycat" molecular blockers to stop tumour cells multiplying, scientists said JOIL

gree.

arily

Patients suffering from dif-ferent cancers will initially take part in the trials at the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, to test the potential of the new

However, one form of lung cancer, small cell lung cancer or oat cell carcinoma which is responsible for 25 per cent of all new cases in the UK, is the real focus of the trial. Initially responsive to drugs, the cancer returns in all but 5 to 10 per cent of patients and is usually resistant to drugs the second time.

Professor John Smyth, director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's Clinical Oncology Unit at the hospital, said yesterday: "We desperately need entirely new approaches if we are to make major differences for patients with a number of types of cancer - particularly the common types."

The trial is the culmination of a 15-year research project by scientists at the ICRF who have shown that molecules known as neuropeptides are potent growth factors. They dock on to the receptor sites on the surface of some cancer cells and stimulate cell growth, sending signals which over-ride healthy cel controls which limit multiplication. Some cancer cells even make their own growth factors to accelerate the process further.

Dr Enrique Rozengurt, from the ICRF's London laboratory, said: "What we have done is discovered ways of blocking these growth factors using antagonist lookalikes which themselves dock onto the receptors, getting in the way of the growth factors. We have identified a group of antagonists which can block every type of growth factor with a particular type of signal."

that chemotherapy followed by growth factor blockers will be a more effective treatment for small cell lung cancer. By the end of the decade, Professor Smyth said, scientists will know if they have made a breakthrough in treatment for this type of cancer.
There are 42,300 new cases

of lung cancer each year, of which 10,000 are of small cell lung cancer. The Phase 1 trials in Edinburgh will determine the safety and efficacy of the new therapy, and the

BBC 'biased' towards Tories

MARIANNE MACDONALD Media Correspondent

More than one-fifth of television viewers believe the BBC's coverage is biased toward the Conservative Party, a survey by the Independent Television Commission reveals today.

Although the public service

corporation is required to be impartial under the terms of its charter, 21 per cent of viewers felt that BBC1 unfairly favoured the Tories and a further 15 per cent said the same of BBC2. Only 7 per cent said ITV was

hiased toward the Conservatives and just 3 per cent thought it was the case with Channel 4. By contrast, 7 per cent felt

BBC1 showed hias towards the Labour Party and only 4 per cent said the same of BBC2. Seven per cent also believed ITV and Channel 4 unfairly favoured Labour.

The findings are part of an annual poll of 1,000 viewers, carried out last year by the commercial television regulator. which is required by the 1990

Broadcasting Act to research public opinion.

The overwhelming perception of bias towards the Conservatives, especially on BBCI. will add pressure to the corporation in the run-up to the general election. It set up a political monitor-

ing unit last year after attempts by Alistair Campbell, Tony Blair's press secretary, to ensure the Labour leader's keynotc speech at the party conference em over the OJ Simpson murder verdict.

Viewers also spoke out about the hias against different professions and groups of the population they believed that all the terrestrial channels showed in their news and current affairs They thought most bias was

shown against single parents (27 per cent) with the unemployed (24 per cent) and trade unions (23 per cent) close behind. The disabled were also on the list (16 per cent), as were social service employees (18 per cent) and women (11 per cent).

Three deny student's murder

"As for suggesting that par-

ents have more choice, it's a

load of balancy. They are going

to opt for a good primary school even if it means forfeiting their

child's early years in order to get

them a place for later," she said.

icised the scheme. Michael Gar-

ratt, head of St William's primary school in Norwich, and

the Norfalk secretary of the Na-

tional Association of Head

Teachers, said his school had al-

ways taken chüdren without

funding at the beginning of the

year in which they were five but

others would now dn the same.

nancial advantage for all schools to take children in the

year in which they are five." Mr

A spokesman for the Dc-

artment for Education and

Ministers expect that there

Employment said vouchers

will be expansion over time in

the state, private and voluntary

sectors," he said. "State schools

gave parents more eboice.

Garratt said.

There's going to be a fi-

State-school heads also crit-

Three young men pleaded not guilty yesterday to the murder 18-year-old Stepben Lawrence at the start of a private prosecution brought by

his pareots. Neil Acourt, 20; Luke Knight, 18, and Gary Dobson, 20, all of Eltham in south-east London, appeared at the Old Bailey charged with murdering the A-level student, who was stahbed to death on 22 April 1993. The trial is expected to

Neither Mr Lawrence's father Neville, 52, a huilder, nor his wife, Dorect, would comment as they arrived at court. It is believed to be only the fourth private prosecution for murder in 130 years.

Mr and Mrs Lawrence

brought a private case against the men after initial proceedings against two people were dropped by the Crown Prose-cution Service in 1993.

The Stephen Lawrence Campaign is raising legal funds and the case will be headed by Michael Mansfield QC.

'Porn video' firefighter loses sacking claim

unfair dismissal yesterday after he was sacked for making a hard core pornographic video which included jokes about the fire

Mark Gregory, 26, was sacked for gross misconduct last August from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service after copies of the video were shown in at least five fire stations across the county.
In the hour-long film Mr

Gregory, who was married at the time, is heard telling his girlfriend Janine, "What do you think of firemen now?" and "This one's for Red Watch".

The Nottingham tribunal

A firefighter lost his claim for served with the brigade for a blue-eyed boy and a high-fli-

March last year. He claimed the video was for private use only, although he admitted in the hearing yesterday he had passed a copy to a friend. "It was just a light-hearted thing in my own time. She [his girlfriend] was quite excited that someone else might be watching it. I told her that other people might watch it."

Mr Gregory said be covered

up for colleagues when he was interviewed by senior fire officers. I am trying not to get any other fire officer implicated. I heard that Mr Gregory, who am trying to save my job. I am

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er and the next minute I am

looking at losing my job. "My head was spinning. You are fighting to protect other people and to protect yourself at that stage. I have lost my joh, lost my wife and I was in complete turmoil and, yes, at that stage I put my colleagues first."
But the fire service argued

that he was guilty of gross mis-conduct and had distributed the video, committing a criminal offence. He was dismissed. Mr Gregory, of Nuthall, Nottingham, was cautioned by po-

lice after the video was discovered, but was not charged. The tribunal chairman, Detek Richards, said: "He must have realised that the consequence of asking anybody else to make copies of the video was that it was likely it would be seen by others. We find it was gross misconduct."

a recruitment crisis CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY

A potentially "catastrophic" shortage of recruits which would have made the British Army operationally ineffective has been averted by urgent government action, it was

Defence Correspondent

General Sir Michael Rose, the Adjutant-General - the Army's head of personnel - said that if swift action had not been taken to halt closures of high-street recruiting offices and induce soldiers to stay on, the Army, would within a few years, have been 20,000 short of its authorised total of 90,000 trained soldiers. The shortage, mostly in infantry, armour and artillery, would have made it "incapable of fulfilling its defence roles".

As Sir Michael addressed a

Ethos and Image" of the British Army, MPs heard that hlack people were deterred from joining up because of a perception of "institutional dis-crimination". The House of Commons Armed Forces Bill Committee heard more evi-

traditional way, using stilts to tie coconut string to wires for the plants to grow up

Army offensive averts

dence from the Commission of Racial Equality. Boh Purkiss, who led a recent inquiry into allegations of racial inequality, said he doubted the time allowed for implementauon of the recent "action plan" agreed hetween the CRÉ and the MoD could be implemented in the time allowed.

Perceptions of racism are one of a number of factors discouraging recruits. The Army's image was also dented recently by the killing of Louise soldiers in Cyprus. Although the

conference in Whitehall on the recruits shortage has been averted, the Army needs to at-tract 15,000 soldiers this year and 17,000 in each of the fol-

lowing two to three years.

Public perception is crucial to recruiting. The conference heard that 43 per cent of recruits come from broken homes and that mothers play an even more important role in influencing them for or against the Army. Sir Michael said the fall in

numbers was due to abandoning junior entry and to rapid closure of recruiting offices. The Army wants to reintroduce the schemes for junior leaders and junior soldiers, abolished in 1992, to help maintain numbers generally and provide a cadre of future sergeants and sergeant-majors. Bonuses of £1,000 to induce soldiers to stay

DAILY POEM

The Arm

Failed. They gave him, at best, six weeks. "A goblin sits on my stump," he said. "It tells lies, makes me reach for books And things with air. That chaplain is just The same when he perches on my bed To preach, promising I'll exist Afterwards." When I found him dead The gardener was burning heaps of leaves. Some caught the breeze and blew away, Blackened. The chaplain's poor eyes Stared through his thick glasses. "Today,"

The amputation to stop the spread

Steven Blyth was born in 1968 and lives in Bolton. In 1994 he was awarded an Eric Gregory Award from the Society of Authors. This poem is taken from his first collection, The Gox, published by Redbeck Press at £3.75.

Jensen by three drunk British on an extra year had also been effective in staunching the loss.

Women-only car park 'unfair to men' Britam's first women-only car with no sanctions against men

Equal Opportunities Commisat Exeter in Devon scrapped because it is said to be a form of discrimination against men.

Exeter City Council opened the first all-female section of its King William Street car park to encourage women on their own to venture into the city centre at night. Within hours of the opening, a complaint was sent to the commission and the council has been told it is break-

ing sex discrimination laws.

park looks set to be closed be- who park in the reserved places cause it is unfair to men. The and signs read: "Kindly leave these spaces vacant for women sion wants the parking scheme motorists". But the commission says that under the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act public services must be offered to men and women on an equal basis.

The 10 spaces are near to the exit, so it is quick and easy for drivers to reach their cars. It is also well lit and security cameras give women drivers more protection.

But the scheme has come in for criticism from the group it seeks to help. Some women fear The scheme is only voluntary it may attract potential attackers.

Walking tall: David Leipnik, vice-chairman of the Friends of the Museum of Kent Life, at Maidstone, tends hops in the

By Steven Blyth

He said later, "I saw ravens. They flew near the fire in the gardens."



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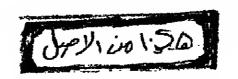
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'Vulnerable young' are forced out of homes

GLENDA COOPER

More than eight out of ten young people who leave home are forced out due to factors such as abuse and family breakdown, according to Centre-point, the charity for the

Unlike in the Eighties when people left home voluntarily to find work, the first nationwide picture of homeless young peo-ple in 1996 is one of "highly vulnerable, very young people struggling actively to overcome hardships", according to the sur-vey, which questioned more than 7,500 people, over 5,000 of which were under the age of 25.

The charity fears that the new Housing Bill - which is passing through the committee stage and proposes removing local authorities' duty to provide permanent housing for the statutory homeless" - will make the situation even worse.

"Changes to Government policy look set to worsen youth homelessness," Victor Adebowale, chief executive of Centrepoint, said.

"Proposed restrictions on housing benefit will leave more young people at risk. Efforts to help young homeless people continue to be hampered by the confusion of housing and social services using different legislation. And the Housing Bill is proving so far to be a missed opportunity to make housing legislation and the Children Act work coherently to protect

young people at risk." In 1987 "pull" factors, such as moving to find work or needing to establish their independence, were given as reasons for leaving home by more than half those surveyed. By 1994-95 only 14 per cent cited such

Britain, says the problem is not just limited to London anymore, but is a national issue.

The study looked at six centres around the country and found that nearly 3,000 young people were monitored in Dorset, in Bournemouth, Poolc, Christchurch and Purbeck, Similarly, the Simon Community in Northern Ireland saw 2.044.

Nearly four out of ten people arriving at Centrepoint — which caters for those between 16 and 25 - werel 7 years or younger and 48 per cent were either black or from ethnic minorities. This compares with a a 5.5 per cent overall proportion of the population be-

longing to ethnic minorities. While three-quarters were actively seeking employment, only about 1 in 20 had any sort of work, although 61 per cent had gained some kind of qualification. More than four in ten had no income whatsoever on arriving at Centrepoint.

Large numbers of young and vulnerable people were still found to be sleeping rough hefore they make their way to a hostel. One-third reported living that way before going to

Many young people may find it difficult to be accepted as officially homeless because they have to be proved "vulnerable", the report said, and social services operate different criteria to sess vulnerability.

Centrepoint also says that measures in the last Budget restricting housing benefit to under-25s to the local average "single room rent" will limit the already restricted choice of private-sector accommodation available. Its report calls for housing benefit for young people to be the same for those over factors. The report, The New 25, and for a national strategy Picture of Youth Homelessness in to tackle youth homelessness. Roughing it: A young man at Waterloo, south London. Centrepoint warns on youth homelessness.



Paddy Ashdown pre-empted eral Democrat fears – revealed in a leaked internal memo – proved too pessimistic, as the party gained 500 seats to hepaign yesterday, hrushing aside the idea that he might he squeezed by Tony Blair's move

Mr Ashdown said: "1 entirewelcome the fact that the Labour leader thinks his party ought to be a party of the centre." But he dismissed both the idea that Labour councils such as Liverpool were of the centre. and the threat from New Labour.

councillors' leader, Andrew Stunell, admitted: "Labour are currently the 'natural' home of dissident Conservatives."

This year, on 2 May, fewer seats are at stake, and Mr Stunell has only predicted gains of only 50-100 seats. Mr Blair and Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, launch the Labour and Conservative campaigns today.

puts Major on ; sticky wicket "Does the Prime Minister take John Major yesterday de-clared himself dug in for the encouragement from the fact that this summer at the Oval will

Poll defeat

political equivalent of a record final wicket stand as Tony Blair exploited the Conservatives' numiliation in the South East Staffordshire by-election. With Brian Jenkins, the man

who cut Mr Major's majority to just one, waiting in the wings to take his Commons seat, the first Question Time after the Easter recess was a romp for Labour. Mr Blair repeatedly pressed the Prime Minister to explain the

defeat then supplied his own answers - "People don't trust the Conservative Party any more" -while Mr Major failed to make much capital out of Labour's mixed messages on tax. Clare Short, the Shadow

transport secretary who dared to speak her mind, was on the Opposition front bench for the exchanges. Mr Major mischievously welcomed her to the chamber, saying he was de-lighted she had been "untied and ungagged" but went easy on her suggestion that those on £34,000-plus should pay more to the Exchequer. Mr Blair said the underlying

reason for last Thursday's byelection defeat last was that people did not trust the Tories on railways, on tax, or on the health service - "and the sooner they get the chance to say so loud and clear the better for

Tory backbencher Geoffrey Clifton-Brown asked Mr Major about an article in the Sunday Express newspaper claiming Mr Blair had told journalists that the top rate of tax would be raised for those on £30,000. The figure was then raised to

£40,000 and subsequently de-

nied altogether by Labour spin doctors, Mr Clifton-Brown said. But this gift was snatched from the Prime Minister's hands by Speaker Betty Boothroyd with reminder that questions should be related to Government policy. Miss Boothroyd ruled out any answer. It was left to former Tory cab-

inet minister Peter Brooke to offer Mr Major a refuge in an analogy from his favourite Photograph: Philip Meech | world of willow and leather. thresholds.

see the 50th anniversary of the longest and largest stand for the last wicket in the history of English cricket?" asked Mr Brooke.

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A Surrey supporter, Mr Ma-jor said he was aware of the anniversary. "I look forward certainly at the Oval to seeing many performances like that by Surrey, perhaps by England. And I have absolutely no doubt that politically we will see their equivalent."

Fortunately for the cheering Tories, nobody on the Opposition benches had a Wisden to hand.

Inside **Parliament** Stephen

Goodwin The record last wicket stand of 249 at the Oval in 1946 was

scored by the opposition - by CT Sarwate and SN Banerjee play-

ing for India against Surrey. ahour was at least rattled during the second reading of the Broadcasting Bill as Virginia Bottomley highlighted the party's U-turn on cross-media ownership rules. Labour had lurched from "paranoid ter-ror" to "sycophantic devotion"

to media groups, the Heritage Secretary said. The Bill eases restrictions on cross-media ownership and paves the way for digital television in Britain, but Mrs Bottomley said there was no commonsense justification for moving at one bound to wholesale deregulation.

Both the Mirror Group and Rupert Murdoch's News International are excluded from control of ITV companies, because each has more than 20 per cent of national newspaper circulation. But Lewis Moonie, Labour's broadcasting spokesman, has argued for an end to

Unions hand 'shopping | Ashdown opens | list' of demands to Blair poll campaign

BARRIE CLEMENT Labour Editor

In the wake of his successful charm offensive among American husiness leaders, Tony Blair was yesterday handed a "shopping list" of demands by the hig unions. Above all, the Labour leader was urged in the first year of government to toughen up proposals to give unions rights to recognition for

collective bargaining.
Davey Hall, president of the moderate Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, called for a Blair administration to force employers to recognise unions where a majority of workers wanted it. So far,

Labour policy only envisages legislation to grant negotiating rights where more than half the "ight of recognition of barworkers belong to a union.

Mr Hall told the Scottish

Trades Union Congress annual congress in Edinburgh that unions often found it impossible to recruit employees if there was no recognition in the first place. The big unions have already.

made their views clear in the private "contact group" of Labour politicians and union leaders, but yesterday was the first time the demand was made public. Labour's union affiliates, which command half the vote at policy-making conferences,

regard the issue as critical Mr Hall told the 500 delegates:

gaining and representation."

posable worker and the zero-

hours contract," Mr Hall said.

Bill Speirs, deputy general secretary of the Scottish TUC,

said that in its first year a Blair

government should legislate to

establish a Scottish parliament.

There should also be an emer-

80,000 new jobs in Scotland.

gency programme to create

A Labour government should also abolish or drastically reduce the qualifying period for claiming unfair dismissal. "It is to claim Labour as a "party of the centre", writes John Reutoul. this injustice that has contributed more than anything else to the current culture of the dis-

"If they were going to squeeze us they would have squeezed us last year, and they didn't." At last year's elections, Libproved too pessimistic, as the party gained 500 seats to hecome the second-largest in local government. But Labour still achieved their best ever result, gaining 1,800 seats. In the memo, the Liberal Democrat

Labour leadership to press on with mayors

DONALD MACINTYRE

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, will today give an unmistakable signal of his intention to go ahead with plans for hig-city mayors — including one for London — after overcoming opposition within his own party.

Mr Blair has won over sceptics, widely believed to have included his environment spokes-man, Frank Dobson, and will today say he regards the idea of directly elected mayors as a key way to revive local democracy. Although he has floated the idea before it was only briefly mentioned in the document on

ty last week and there has been strong opposition from some council leaders. Mr Blair will now go significantly further in his speech to a conference on the future of the capital in making it clear that he wants the idea fully developed in time for inclusion in the general election manifesto.

The idea comes in the wake

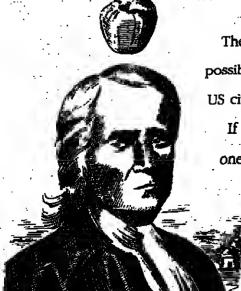
of leaks suggesting that at least one government minister has become converted to the idea of a wider elected authority for London. In a letter to the Downing Street Policy Unit, the minister proposes that the wealthy City of London Corporation which Labour would preserve should disappear under plans for London published by the par- a new central elected authority.

constituencies have denied writing the letter. But according to the leak the anonymous minister has broken ranks with Tory policy with proposals to counter Labour's plans, saying they would "give us something fresh and ... refresh our commitment to local government".

■ A new call for Labour's plans for Scottish devolution to be ratified by a referendum is made by the left-of-centre Institute of Public Policy Research today. The IPPR also calls for the number of Scottish Westminster MPs to be reduced and Secretary of State for Scotland to be abolished in return for the creation of a Scottish Parliament.

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rstep in Ash, Survey (or any of the other 6 towns called Ash) all the way to Phoenix, Arizona.



North Korea insists it will only talk to US

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

North Korea appeared last night to have rejected a US-South Korean proposal for four-nation talks aimed at bringing about a permanent peace on the peninsula.

Hours after the announcement of the joint initiative by the South Korean President, Kim Young Sam, and President Bill Clinton, the North Korean amhassador to Moscow said his government did not need any mediators, and that it was prepared to negotiate with the United States alone.

"At present other countries have no role to play in this area," Song Sung Pil was quoted as saying. "There is no need for an international conference on this question.

The proposal, for a conference involving China. the US. and the two Koreas, emerged from a summit on the South Korean island of Cheju, where Mr Clinton stopped en route to more talks in Japan and Russia.

iff

Emphasising that "the establishment of a stable, permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula is the task of the Korean people", an announcement by the two presidents none the less called for a govemment-level meeting between



agenda will be security issues countries, "as soon as possible and without preconditions ...

aimed at achieving a permanent peace agreement."
The Kim-Clinton summit

had originally been intended as little more than a handshaking session, but was upgraded after an interlude 10 days ago when North Korean troops made three illegal incursions into the demilitarised zone which divides

Pyongyang has been pressing for a direct treaty with Washington to replace the military armistice which ended the Korean War of 1950-53, a prospect sistently rejected peace talks with the South. The last time they were floated was in 1994, but the idea fell through after the death of Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founding president.

Soon after, Pyongyang pro-voked a crisis when it refused to admit inspectors to an atomic-energy plant which was suspected of generating eapons-grade plutonium.
An international consortium

formed to supply safe nuclear reactors to Pyongyang included South Korean officials but apart from these low-level technical contacts there has been no official dialogue between the two sides. Even before North Korea's rejection, South Kore-an and US officials were warning that the North was unlikely to leap at the proposal, which will doubtless be discussed on the Japanese and Russian legs of Mr Clinton's tour.

Last night he arrived in

Tokyo for a two-day visit intended to address the troubled US-Japan Security Treaty, a key component of American defence policy in Asia. Since September, when a girl was raped by US troops on Okinawa. there have been demands in Japan for a cut in US bases. On Monday the US Defense Secretary, William Perry, unveiled a plan to reduce military facil-ities in Okinawa by up to a fifth.



Peaceful intentions: Bill Clinton and the South Korean president, Kim Young Sam, on their

IN BRIEF

Germany abandons personnel mines

Bonn — German armed forces will abandon the use of anti-personnel landmines and gradually abolish their stockpiles to set an example for other countries, officials said yesterday. Government sources said Defence Minister Volker Rühe hoped the move would lend momentum to a United Nations conference resuming next week that aims to curtail use of the weapons that indiscriminately kill or maim more than 25,000 people a year.

Plea to President

Nairobi — As internal rivairies plague Kenya's legal opposition parties, leaders of the Safina party, formed 10 months ago, urged President Daniel arap Moi to help legalise their group. There has been no official explanation why authorities have not registered Safina, whose interim secretary general is pale-ontologist Richard Leakey-AP

Liberian clashes

Minrovia — Gangs of youths, some armed with grenade launchers, advanced towards barracks in the centre of the Liberian capital where ethnic Krahn militiamen are holed up. Machine-gun fire echoed around the Barclay Training Centre complex, where up to 20,000 are trapped. Reuter

'Tunnel gangsters'

Berlin - Six men known as the 'tunnel gangsters" went on trial on charges of stealing 16.3m German marks (£7.3m) from a Commerzbank branch in Berlin on 27 June last year. The robbers escaped through an 80metre tunnel they had dug over the preceding 18 months. AP

Romanian elections

Bucharest - Romania's leftwing government yesterday set a 2 June date for nationwide local elections. Interest will focus on the capital where retired tennis star Ilie Nastase is standing for the ruling Party of Social Democracy (PDSR). Reuter

Airport shooting

Jakarta - Indonesia's military opened an investigation yesterday into the killing of 10 soldiers and five civilians by an army officer who ran amok at Timika airport in Irian Jaya, a military official said. Reuter

Israel remembers

Jerusalem — Israel came to a halt for two minutes to remember the six million Jews exterminated by the Nazis during World War Two.

1

Gaddafi overtures cut no ice with White House

RUPERT CORNWELL Washington

The US seems mightily unim-pressed by a new offer from the Lihyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, to permit interna-tional inspection of a suspected chemical-weapons plant near Tripoli, which Washington vows will never enter service, even if it has to use military force to prevent it doing so.

In a CNN interview marking the tenth anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's bombing of the Libyan capital, Col Gaddafi denied that the site, in-

side a hill at Tarhuna, 35 miles single out Tarhuna as a menace the capital, was being developed as a secret, well-nigh invulnerable site to manufacture chemical and biological weapons.

The US had produced no concrete evidence to support its claims, he said. None the less, Libya was ready to permit international experts to examine the site, albeit under certain conditions which Col Gaddafi

satisfy Washington which, despite some scepticism from al-

would not specify. But such equivocation will not

to global security - complete with a warning by William Perrv. Defense Secretary, that the US was prepared to attack the plant if necessary to prevent its completion. This is likely within 12 to 18 months, according

Photograph: Reuters

Mr Clinton rejected that op-

tion yesterday but the meeting

raised the possibility of a four-way deal, involving all the main

It met with a cautious wel-come from Peking. "We have

taken notes of reports on the

four-way talks," said Shen Guo-fang, a spokesman for the Chi-

nese Foreign Ministry, before the North Korean statement.

What I can stress is that we

hope peace and stability can be

maintained and that China will

a crumbling economy, and food

Despite political uncertainty,

play a constructive role."

combatants in the war.

to intelligence estimates here. Although Pentagon officials say the US will first seek to halt the plant by diplomatic means, they leave no doubt that the military threat is real. Countering claims that, short of nuclear weapons, the Pentagon had no lies including Egypt and France, means of knocking out so well More details of Tarhuna has gone to unusual lengths to protected a target, they point to emerged at a Pentagon briefing

capable of piercing 100ft of soil or concrete 22ft thick. Washington, moreover, has

attacked Libya before, as the setting of the interview underlined. The Libyan leader spoke in the ruins of his house destroved when F-111s bombed Tripoli on 16 April 1986, in reprisal for an attack at a Berlin nightclub which killed two US soldiers. Mr Reagan said the US had firm evidence of "direct" Libyan responsibility.

ground-penetrating bombs like last week on chemical-weapons the 5,000lh GBU-28, said to be proliferation, including an artist's impression of the site based on satellite photos. It shows a partially excavated and terraced desert hillside, with roads leading to tunnels bored

into the foot of the mountain. Once complete, officials say, Tarhuna will be able to produce 110 tons of poison and nerve gases over three years, as much as at Rahta, a previous sus-pected Libyan chemicalweapons plant that was closed after a fire in 1990. "We have absolutely no doubt ... the new facility is intended to make chemical weapons," Patrick Hughes, head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said. But domestic politics also

play a part. Anxious to fend off Republican criticism that he is neglecting defence, Mr Clinton wants to show his administration is responding to the new chal-lenges of a post-Cold War world. above all to the threat posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Even so, Col Gaddafi spoke almost warmly of him in the interview, calling Mr Clinton "a man of peace", unlike his predecessors in the White House.



Gadaffi responds to questions on an alleged chemical facility in Libya during an interview with CNN News on Monday

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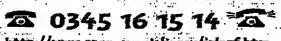
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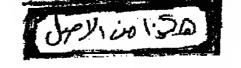




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When the truth is too hard to bear

Robert Block in Johannesburg witnesses a nation struggling to come to terms with its grief

ROBERT BLOCK Johannesburg

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At one point yesterday, when a man's humiliation and pain pain filled the East London City hall to bursting point, Arch-bishop Desmond Tutu, the chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, simply laid his head on the table in front of him and began to weep uncontrollably.

When he finally stopped crying, he lifted his head, wiped his face and called a recess. It was the second day of commission hearings whose aim is to start a process of healing South Africa after the brutality of

and Reconciliation Commis-sion's proceedings on Monday was marked by a swarm of international television cameras and witnesses' composure, then vesterday's hearings were notable for their surprising lack of media presence and for the tears that the testimonies of victims' mothers and wives gen-

Archbishop Tutu broke down at the testimony of Singqok-

wana Malgas, who served 14 years at the notorious Robben Island prison, where he was often tortured, Asked to detail the tortures, he said: "I was always suffocated by a mask. Then there was the 'helicopter training - they put a broomstick under your knees and then..."
The man's face contorted at the memory, and it was more than than the archbishop could bear.

He was not the only one to cry. Witnesses, onlookers. commission gophers and journalists all broke down at one time or mothers of apartheid activists laid bare their personal pain and loss to the world.

Sometimes the tears seemed If the first day of the Truth to be contagious. A witness would start to sob and then a member of the audience would begin to cry. Soon the tears would spread like a hush fire, until it seemed like almost everyone in the room was weeping, wiping their eyes or trying to push a lump hack down their throat. One foreign observer was overheard to remark: "This country is so traumatised. If one person is hurt, then so is every-



A young spectator arrives at yesterday's hearing of South Africa's Truth and Reconcilation Commission Photograph: AFP

But reliving and relieving the pain of victims is what the Commission is all about. President Nelson Mandela's government of national unity set up the Truth Commission to reveal as much as possible of hitherto ludden abuses during the apartheid era in the hope that by doing so, the nation will be able to heal its conscience.

The first witness to testify was Ncediwe Mfeti. a cousin of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, and the wife of Phindile Mfeti, a student at the University of Natal, who disappeared in 1987. She told the court how Phindile was placed under house arrest and then banned to the Transkei. She spoke of

her last conversation with him while he was at university: he had just bought a new pair of jeans that he was going to take to a tailor for alterations. That was the last she had heard from him. She described how, since his disappearance, she had desperately tried to fit together the pieces of the puzzle of her husband's disappearance. When asked what she ex-

pected from the Commission, she replied that she wanted her husband's body. "Even if he was hurned," she said in a whisper. If only I could get a little bone or ashes that were his." Толі Mazwai, 83, told the

Commission that her son Siphi-

we was killed in a 1988 shoot-

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out with police after he joined the armed wing of President Nelson Mandela's then-banned African National Congress. She cried as she explained that the police had kept the body for so long that it had begun decomposing and was beyond embalming when it was delivered to the undertakers.

Archbishop Tutu had to adjourn the hearings for 15 minutes to allow Nomonde Calata to compose herself. She had collansed in her chair with a cry of anguish which hushed the packed assembly as she described the moment in 1985 when she first suspected her teacher husband, Fort Calata, had been killed by security

police. "Some friends came to my house to tell me I should not be alone at a time like this. I was only 20. I could not deal with it." Mrs Calata said before breaking into uncontrollable sob-

Speaking through a Xhosa in-terpreter, Mrs Calata said that then she viewed the body of her husband: "The dogs had bitten him very severely. I could not believe the dogs had already had their share.

Graeme Simpson, the direc-tor of the Centre of the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, said the the outpouring of emotion was a positive thing. "What we are starting to see is a process of catharsis."

KwaZulu inquiry to weigh fraud accusations

President Nelson Mandela and his Zulu rival. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, yesterday agreed to form an all-party commission to investigate al-leged fraud ahead of next month's local elections in South Africa's most troubled province, writes Robert Block. The decision came amid accusations and countercharges of rigged voting rolls and political thug-

gery in KwaZulu-Natal. Mr Mandela's African National Congress says it has evi-dence of massive fraud ahead of the 29 May local elections in the province which is ruled by Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party. According to Mike Sutcliffe, a leading ANC member in the province, hetween 30 and 60 per cent of names on rolls throughout the province are fraudulent. The ANC wants

the polls postponed. But Chief Buthelezi, who is also a junior partner and Min-ister of Home Affairs in Mr Mandela's Government of National Unity, rejects charges that Inkatha is behind any fraud and has threatened to pull out of the government if the polls do not go ahead as planned.

With some polls suggesting there has been a shift in urban areas of the province away from the ANC and to Inkatha, the chief has the scent of political victory in his nostrils and does not want to risk a delay. Chief Buthelezi could use an electoral boost in his province to strengthen his hand in his disagreements ANC is also rigging voter lists.

with Mr Mandela over the question of provincial autonomy. But the charges of fraud and

the accusations by non-governmental organisations that Inkatha has created vast "nogo" areas in the countryside for people who do not support Inkatha are such that other parties have also recommended that the polls he postponed.
The National Party of Deputy
President FW de Klerk recom

mended a special commission to look into the matter, and Mr Mandela has accepted the plan. "I have decided to appoint a committee of all parties at parliament," the President said after talks with Chief Buthelezi in Cape Town. "That committee will investigate the allegations and I will act on the basis of their recommendations."

Mr Mandela said irregularities to be investigated included the registration of more than 70 people at one address and registration of voters at vacant lots. Asked if it was possible the elections might be postponed. Mr Mandela said: "They [the committee] may say there must be a postponement. I will listen to their recommendation."

Chief Buthelezi said he welcomed the decision to appoint the committee, but made it clear that if the vote were put off his party could still decide to pull out of the government. According to one report yesterday, the situation is complicated because in many areas the

'Scum' charge levelled at Sydney murder suspect

ROBERT MILLIKEN

There was a tense moment in Australia's backpacker murder trial yesterday when a friend of two British women described the man accused of killing them and five other hitch-hikers as "scum".

Pauline Vuletich had just given evidence in the New South Wales Supreme Court about her friendship with Joanne Wal-ters and Caroline Clarke, both 22, whose bodies were found in the Belanglo State Forest south of Sydney in September 1992, five months after they disappeared. Ms Walters had suffered multiple stab wounds and Ms Clarke had been shot 10 times

in the head.

Ivan Milat, a 51-year-old road worker, has pleaded not guilty to charges of murdering the Britons, three Germans and two Australians. He has also denied a charge of kidnapping Paul Onions, another British

tourist, who identified Mr Milat in court three weeks ago as the man who abducted him and threatened him with a revolver on the road near the for-est in January 1990.

As Mrs Vuletich left the witness box she walked past Mr Milat in the dock. She turned towards him and said "seum". He did not respond.

Mrs Vuletich told the jury of eight men and four women how she had met Ms Walters while travelling in Greece in 1990, before Mrs Vuletich married. They became friends and travelled to Australia together the following year. On the night of Good Friday 1992, Mrs Vuletich visited Ms Walters at her Sydney flat where Ms Wal-ters and Ms Clarke told her of their plans to hitch-hike to Western Australia in search

fruit-picking jobs. "It was the last time I saw Joanne," Mrs Vuletich said. The two women disappeared after setting out from Sydney together the next day. Earlier, Gillian Walters.

Joanne's mother, was overcome with emotion and unable to give evidence. Choking back sobs as she entered the witness stand, Mrs Walters nodded as Mr Justice David Hunt, the trial judge, asked her if she would prefer to be excused.

Ray Walters, Joanne's father. said their daughter had left their home in south Wales for a travelling holiday with Mrs Vuletich (then Reid) in Australia in May 1991. "She rang us every two weeks from Australia," he said. "She wouldn't go anywhere or change addresses without letting us know. The telephone calls stopped on the Wednesday before Easter 1992.

Caroline Clarke's parents. Ian and Jacqueline Clarke, of Hexham, Northumberland also gave evidence yesterday about their last contact with their daughter. The trial continues.

See page - 2

section two

^{ay} Wednesday

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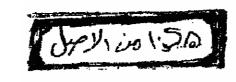
Madonna with child

Budapest - The American pop star Madnina, who ooce said she would advertise for a man to father her child, is pregnant with her first baby and is "deliriously happy", her publi-cist, Liz Roseoberg, said yesterday. The father is her personal physical trainer, Carlos Leon (pictured with Madonna) whom the 37-year-old met in New York.

Madonna is currently in Budapest, filming the screeo version of Evita. Ms Rosenberg said Leon was a professiooal hicyclist who had become Madonna's personal trainer, adding "He also does a little acting and



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the little village of Bselim. Just past the local monastery, the French and Swedish packing cases for the millions of dollars of new transformers still lie next to the smouldering wreckage of the power-station that had just been restored with foreign aid after its civil war damage. Bselim was a symbol of Lehanon's rehirth.

Until four Israeli F-16 fighter-hombers dived on it and in tess than three minutes destroyed £13m of equipment and cut Lebanon's power supply by up to a third for the next 18 months by firing 20 US-made laser-guided missiles into the plant. The great 150-kilowatt transformers were still hurning yesterday as Mohih Itani, the director of Lebanon's gen-erating board, the Electricité du Lihan, walked with anger through the ruins.

"This is an act of sabotage," he said. "The Israelis want to bomh Lebanon hack to the dark ages. No Hizbollah man has ever been here."

Mr Itani is right. Bselim lies in the Christian heartland of station. Lebanon, among a community

rael's infrastructure "damage" consisted of a broken power line to a single house in Galilee.

But the destruction of Bselim and the neighbouring sub-station at Jamhour has emasculated Lebanon's power supply. Mr ltani estimates total destruction, along with the bombing of electrical switching systems in the south and a third station in the Bekaa, as close to

"Do you really think this was donc because the Hizbollah have been firing Katyushas [rockets]?" he asked, picking up a twisted piece of American missile fuselage as the hurning silicone oil licked at the incinerated transformers. Each of them was installed to convert the 150 kilovolt lines from Lehanon's two power stations at Zoukh and Jiye into 66 kilovolt transmission to sub-stations across the country.

Two US-made missiles failed to explode and huried themselves instead deep in the earth and concrete around the

"This was done to attack



the moment of our rebirth," Mr Itani said. A gateman at the station was

wounded by shrapnel as the rockets exploded, devastating the home of the local plant di-

of the very few to realise how the Israelis knew what to hit. "In their 1982 invasion of Lebanon, their soldiers broke through the gate and stole all the plans and maps of the trans-

tems," he said. "At the time, we didn't understand why they would ever want to take them

Whether French foreign min-

with the Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres in Jerusalem yesterday is unknown. He certainly should have done; because Bselim had been newly restored with the help of a £5m aid pack-

Britain's Jews

voice 'concern'

ln 1944 a V1 flying bomb land-ed in the garden of my parents' home in St John's Wood, destroying the back of the house. My mother and father were both out and the only casualty was the cat, which had all its fur blown off. As a child, I was fascinated by an inlaid mosaic table which survived but with a line scoured where the hlast had

I thought of the St John's Wood house last Friday as Bibi Netanyahu, leader of the right-wing Likud party, told a CNN interviewer that the effect of Katyusha rockets on Kiryat Shmona, this northern Israeli town, was much the same as that of V1 flying bombs and V2 rock-

cts falling on London. Watching Israelis on international television on the day Mr Netanyahu spoke, it would be just possible to believe he was drawing a fair parallel. In the morning a Katyusha exploded in Kiryat Shmona beside a car. whose petrol tank exploded, hadly burning Hanni Himi, wife of the deputy mayor. CNN showed the car hlazing. Within hours Israel retaliated with artillery fire and bombing which has since forced 400,000

Lebanese to flee their homes. But there is no comparison between the scale of the casualties and destruction on the two sides of the border. Yesterday the Israeli army said Hizbollah, the Lehanese guerrilla move-ment, had fired 120 Katyushas since Operation Grapes of Wrath began on Thursday. So far, Mrs Himi is the only serious casualty; six or seven people have been lightly wounded. Higher figures given by some news agencies for the number injured include 30 people suffering from shock.

Obviously it is more dangerous this week to be in Kiryat than in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. But in contrast with 120 Hizbol lah rockets in six days, Israeli guns have been firing more than 3,000 heavy rounds in a 24hour period, according to UN officers. In addition, the air force has launched more than 200 bomber or missile raids every day. In this way Mr Netanyahu's comparison hetween

Katyushas and the V weapons is wholly misleading. It is difficult for journalists to avoid giving the impression that the military operations by both sides, and the suffering they cause, is comparable. I was

on the Israeli-Lebanese border, at 9am last Friday when we heard a salvo of rockers had hit Kiryat Shmona. We drove first to where a Katyusha had landed near a tree, blowing off branches and peppering housic is

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es with shrapnel.

The first person we met,
Yitzhak Michaely, said: "I can'i believe my luck." He took us to his apartment and pointed to a hole in the plaster above a sofa. He reading a book and drinking coffee when a Katyusha exploded in the distance. He left his seat and a secand rocket exploded on the other side of the road, sending a piece of metal through the window which hit the wall where his head had just heen.

The first Katyusha Mr Michaely heard was the one which set fire to Mrs Himi's car. She was very unlucky: the rocket hit the road as she drove past, the explosion digging a shallow hole in the tarmac about 12in across. The car was so badly hurned you could not tell its original colour and the tyres had melted. I talked to a man who had helped Mrs Himi out of the car. He said at first he could not get the door of the car open and she was already on fire.

Driving back to my hotel in Metulla I intended to write a story solely about Mrs Himi and Mr Michaely. He was badly frightened and she had suffered terrible injuries. But I had misgivings, not about reporting what had happened to them, but of giving the impression that it was a typical event and that Kiryat Shmona was heing pounded by rocket fire.

In the event, the news of the attack was overtaken by the arrival of Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, and General Amnon Shahak, army chief of staff, at a nearby army base to confirm that Israel was going to retaliate by ordering people to leave 41 villages in Lebanon if they did not wa artillery and air strikes.

the bombardment of northern Israel creates its own political problems. Few Israelis go to northern Galilee: they get their idea of the Katyusha attacks from Israeli television and the

Mr Peres has promised to stop the rockets, but he cannot deliver on this pledge unless the US persuades Syria to curb Hizbollah. The Katyushas are too small and mobile to he successfully eliminated by artillery and air strikes alone. If diplomacy fails, the only alternative

Diplomats fear lengthy campaign will work in guerrillas' favour

RUPERT CORNWELL Washington and MARY DEJEVSKY

Intense US efforts to halt Is-rael's pounding of Hizbollah in southern Lehanon reflect a growing fear In Washington that continuation of the offenfor the guerrilla movement in the Arah world and set back the faltering peace process even fur-

Although he is accompanying President Clinton on his current visit to Japan. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is personally directing the diplofire, huilt on an end lo Hizbollah rocket attacks on northern Israel and disarming the guerrillas; in return for a commitment by Israel to withdraw from its security zone in southern Lebanon.

In essence, the plan is an en-larged version of an under-

ith child

standing also hrokered by Washington, which ended a similar Israeli onslaught against Hizbollah positions in July 1993. But calls are increasing for Prime Minister Shimon Peres to

call a halt unilaterally. Recognising that the offensive is "smart politics" for Mr Peres, ahead of this spring's yesterday nonetheless insisted that "having made his point, he needs to bring the offensive to an end". Israel had every right to defend itself from terrorist threats, said the paper, a staunch supporter of the Jewish state. "But continuing the retaliatory raids much longer can only reinforce Hizbollah's mes-

sage to Lebanese civilians." France has also pressed for an end to the Israeli attacks, but has had little success. The French foreign minister, Hervé de Charette, pressed on yes-terday with his lone diplomatic mission to restore peace to south Lebanon, despite being given the brush-off by Mr Peres the previous evening.

edged by Mr de Charette to be a failed meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister, the usefulness of his visits to Syria and Lebanon, and his telephone calls to Tehran, must be questionable. Diplomatic moves by the US could leave France more visibly sidelined than it was even after the US became involved in Bosnia and hrokered the Dayton peace accords.

The French Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, who has just returned from a five-day tour of the French Caribbean, issued a sharp reprimand to Israel, but stressed also the legitimacy of its security concerns. Mr Juppé's careful double emphasis appeared designed to move France closer to the stance of its EU partners over the conflict. Until Mr Juppé returned from the Caribbean, the French response centred on its unique contacts in the region and the



macy has so far failed

make to restoring peace. This has added to an impression of a lack of coordination, if not actual fracturing, in the organisation of French foreign policy between the foreign ministry, the prime minister's office and the Elysée, where Jacques Chirac has pressed a more activist stance.

MICHAEL STREETER and DANIEL ROSEMAN

Leaders of Britain's Jewish community have met with antiterrorist squad officers this week following a threat by Hizbollah, the Iranian-hacked Muslim guerrilla group, to extend its activities beyond the

The meeting at Scotland Yard, part of a regular dialogue, discussed the extra threat caused by current events in Lebanon and northern Israel. The interception last week by Belgian police of an Iranian freighter carrying explosives which it was claimed were destined for Munich has also

heightened fears that the Jew-

ish diaspora faces fresh attacks. Michael Whine, spokesman for the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said that over the past few days the BBC moni-toring service had recorded short-wave broadcasts from Hizbollah threatening to extend

their campaign to Jewish and Israeli targets outside the Middle East. "Clearly this is of concern to us," said Mr Whine, "When groups like Hizbollah or Hamas make threats they invariably carry them ont ... They keep their

Mr Whine said the threats from Hizbollah - and also кец усгу seriously. The British community is not expected to take any extra measures, however. Security has been high since the bomhing of the Israeli Em-bassy in London in July 1994.

The Community Security Organisation, run by the Jewish community nationally, sends out briefings to Synagogues on anti-semitic attacks and groups, and the Board of Deputies acts on any intelligence reports from Scotland Yard. Many synagogues have installed closed circuit TV cameras, trained volunteers in security and surveillance techniques, and meet



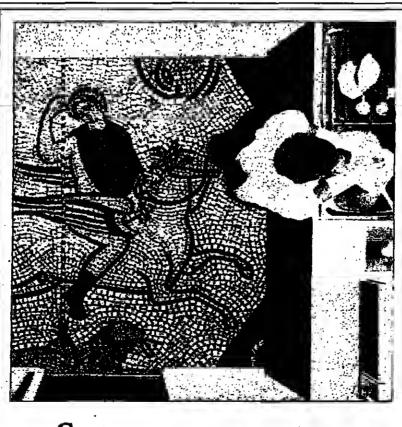
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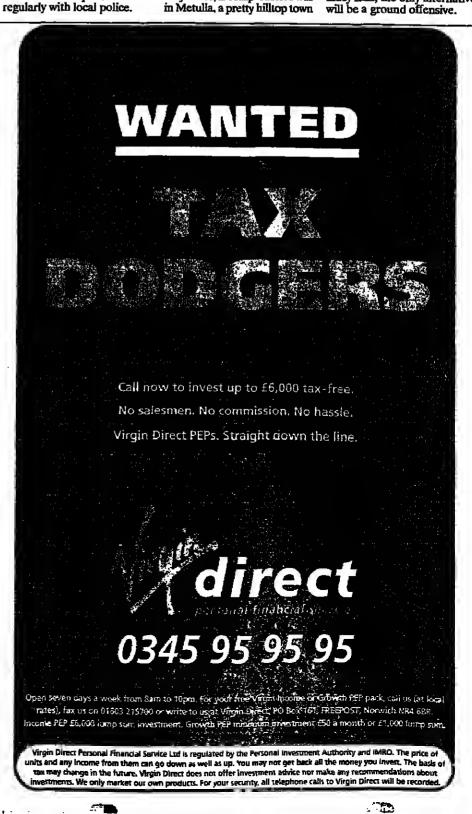
THE INDEPENDENT section two



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France is urged to restrict migrants

MARY DEJEVSKY

A French parliamentary commission has recommended wide-ranging measures to righten the country's immigration laws and reduce what its chairman called the "temptations" of France as a place of refuge. The measures would include restrictions on the right to free health care and education, compulsory finger-printing of visa applicants from particular countries, and an extension of the time that suspected illegal im-migrants can be detained while their right to remain is verified.

Introducing the report vesterday, the commission's chairman, centre-right MP Jean-Pierre Philibert, said illegal immigrants in France could number anything between 250,000 and 600,000 (though some say it is lower) and constituted a drain on the country's economy, par-ticularly on its health care budget. The recommendation is that people without residence papers should in future qualify only for emergency health-care and treatment for contagious diseases. He conjured up a picture of illegal immigrants basking in a profusion of free medical treatments courtesy of the French taxpayer.

Tougher sanctions would also be introduced for those found to be employing illegal aliens, including the removal of a legal residence permit from all those involved that would open the way to deportation. Only parents - not uncles and siblings would be able to register children for a school place, and under-age delinquents could find themselves deported into the care of their home

country's social services. The report was met with furious objections from the political left - the four Socialist members of the commission

refused to endorse it - and immigrant support groups, and mild approval from the farright National Front, which said the recommendations were "on the right track" but did not go

far enough.

A number of the recommendations, however, appeared to embarrass even sections of the mainstream political right. The chairman of the parliamentary tegislative affairs committee, Pierre Mazeaud warned that he could not subscribe to all the proposals and care would have to be taken to ensure the constitutional rights were not violated. These include the rights to education, health and family life. All these caveats mean the report's recommendations will probably not become law in their current form.

They do, however, serve a political purpose, which is to convince the French public that the government is serious about combating illegal immigration. The silence on the issue of immigration from mainstream candidates was widely seen as a reason why the National Front took a record 15.15 per cent of the vote in the presidential election and took control of three city councils in the municipal elections that followed.

The tough stance taken by the French interior ministry since Mr Chirac's election, which has included security checks introduced in the wake of last summer's terrorist bombings and applied largely to people of north African appearance, has led some critics to say that the government is doing the National Front's joh for it.

A report for the UN Human Rights Commission published in Geneva last week spoke of a wave of xenophobia and racism" sweeping France that was "highly prejudicial" to its claim to he the "homeland of human rights".



Steam driven: Chinese cyclists emerge from a man-made fog on a Peking cycle lane yesterday as workmen mending underground pipes, used to heat apartment buildings, released boiling water on to the street Photograph: Greg Baker/AP

China tries to halt march of Aids

realistic

TERESA POOLE

China's south-western province of Yunnan will set up Aids quarantine checkpoints along its borders with South-East Asia in an attempt to stop the increase of HIV infection in the worst afflicted part of the country.

However, the idea of a disease-prevention helt along its borders with Vietnam, Laos and Burma appears to he a throw-back to Peking's muchcriticised view that Aids is a foreign evil rather than a problem which China must address as a domestic issue.

There are about 2,500 official cases of HIV infection in China, but many experts believe the real number is nearer 100,000. Yunnan province, which has a serious heroin-addiction and drug-trafficking problem because of its proximity to the Golden Triangle opium-growing countries, accounts for more

Yesterday, it was announced that the Yunnan provincial gov-ernment would spend about 500m yuan (£40m) to set up infectious-disease checkpoints and protection belts at six crossing points along the 2,500-mile

The province would also improve grassroots prevention programmes to control diseases including Aids, cholera and leprosy, said Yang Chaohin, of the provincial health department.

There were no details as to how the checkpoints would work, and the booming border trade across these very porous borders will present a considerable challenge to the plan. Nor is it clear what the checkpoints will actually check. Yunnan's border towns do not have the resources for large-scale testing, and any requirement that travellers carry Aids-test

than three-quarters of the offi-cial number. certificates would seem both im-practical and volverable to form practical and vulnerable to forgeries. Given the ease with which people manage to smuggle drugs into Yunnan, the idea of policing the whole border is un-

> China has traditionally viewed Aids as a "foreign prob-lem". Even now, any foreigner who wants to live in China must first present a very recent Aids test certificate. Chinese returning from living abroad must similarly he tested.

It is only over the past year that Chinese authorities have started to be more open about the need for Aids education and public-health measures, and to treat Aids as a potential Chinese problem. The country's first national Aids education and publicity campaign was launched only last November, on World Aids Day. Along with the economic boom of the past decade, China has also experienced a surge in the number of arms of prostitutes.

drug addicts, fuelling what in other Asian countries has been the first wave of HTV infection. While most Chinese people

tend to be extremely reticent when talking about sex, the past 10 years has also seen a boom in prostitution, especially in the cities and fast-growing coastal areas. This has been true at all levels of society. China's strict family-plan-

ning rules mean that many women rely on IUDs for contraception, and condoms are not popular with Chinese men, further increasing the possibility of HIV infection.

China's vast floating popu-lation of 90 million also adds to the problem in organising Aids education.

Every year millions of farmers leave behind their wives and children and head for the construction sites of China's cities out of the clutches of the au-

Silence from Russia over 'secret' base

Moscow

Government officials Moscow were yesterday maintaining a stony silence over a report that Russia is huilding a huge underground military complex in the Ural moun-

According to yesterday's New York Times, the structure is hidden inside the Yamantau mountain in the southern Urals and is served by a railroad and a major road, and employs thousands of workers.

The newspaper, quoting un-named Western and Russian sources, says the project, which has reportedly been spotted by US satellites, has mystified American experts, who believe it may be anything from a secret weapons plant to an underground command post, for use in the event of nuclear war.

Although the US has apparently been aware of the site for some years, the issue has surfaced publicly at an awkward time for President Clinton, who will arrive in Moscow on Friday for a G7 summit on nuclear safety and related issues. His administration is spending hundreds of millions of dollars helping Russia dismantle thousands of unwanted nuclear weapons in the aftermath of the Cold War.

He has also personally made little effort to disguise his sup-

port for Mr Yeltsin's efforts to he re-elected as president. against a strong Communist challenge. But, to win approval in Congress for financing Russian nuclear disarmament, his administration has had to convince congressmen that the Russians - who are desperate-ly short of funds - are not undertaking new military projects, apart from defensive ones

Yesterday, Russia's Ministry of Defence and Foreign Ministry refused to comment on the project, or its purpose. A Defence Ministry spokesman shrugged off inquiries: "We haven't read the paper yet, so

we have no reaction." The New York Times said, according to some Russian officials, the project began during the Brezhnev cra. But, despite heing strapped for cash - millions of workers have suffered late wages - the Russian gov-ernment had evidently decided to continue with the work, a decision which underscores the influence that the military still wields within the Kremlin.

Such is the size of the project that it has been the subject of several reports in the Russian local media, including those in Beloretsk, not far from site. These reveal that worried locals have been told by officials that the project is, variously, a store for state treasures, a mine, a food depot, a dump for nuclear waste, and a nuclear bunker,

Man held over mass killings in Ukraine

PHIL REEVES

After a hunt in which national guards were called in, police in Ukraine believe they have caught a man who killed 40 people, including eight families. Officials said the suspect, an

unemployed 37-year-old former forestry student identified only as "Citizen O", confessed to a rampage through the former Soviet republic in which victims were shot and their homes hurnt. In a string of normally

peaceful and backward rural communities, he broke into homes, wiping out men, women and children as they slept. Troops were called in to assist with the search. The terror began on 30 December, when he killed a family of four and a passer-by thought to have seen

him escaping. Ukraine's First Deputy Interior Minister said the suspect, "psychologically normal", had confessed to 10 other killings since 1989, committed before his latest rampage.

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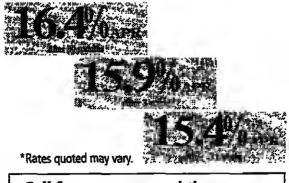


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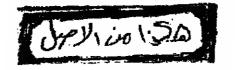
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t was Sir Richard Scott who summed it up. For more than two years Sir Richard was painted by the Conservative establishment as a near revolutionary, not One of Us, an outsider. Yet soon after he delivered his report on arms exports to Iraq Sir Richard, the epitome of the independent judiciary so disliked by the Government, revealed the other side of

A press photographer caught him dressed to the nines in hunting garb on the back of an Irish mare about to go fox-hunting. The Tom remarks that reveal what appears to be deep-Paine of the High Court

The social

background of the

judiciary does

power ought to

was suddenly exposed as a rich man spending his leisure as such folk do. Last summer there was a fuss after the discovery that judges hear-ing cases at Lewes Court

186, 186

were put up in a mansion nestling in the Downs at leiscombe. The jud were hemused. Opulent: stone manor houses are ... after all, where many of

perks. The upper ranks of the judiciary, from High Court judges up to Lords of Appeal, are all white and (bar eight) male. Four out of five were educated at Oxbridge. A guestimate is that nearly nine out of 10 attended a public school; if not, they went to a direct grant or

good grammar. Judges are not, in the words of the judicial oath, "all manner of people". Officially, that makes no difference. The Lord Chancellor's Department gave evidence to the House of Commons home affairs committee in Fehruary: "Whatever their social background, almost all candidates in the course of lengthy experience in legal practice will have become familiar with social conditions and behaviour in many and diverse situations."

There is a case for toff judges: they will have anything else could look a recipe for exclusion the confidence to heard their social equals. Simon Lec, author of Judging Judges makes the point diplomatically. "Perhaps aloof judges are more likely to take a counter-majoritarian position. Unrepresentativeness doesn't preclude understanding or a commitment to

The problem is that their rationality is called into question when they hand down sentences that appear inappropriate or make

seated ignorance of everyday life. Then the argument is that they would make hetter decisions if they were more representative.

Both the Lord Chancellor. who now advertises to recruit some judges, and the Bar Connmatter - holders of cil, representing the barristers from whose ranks all senior pointments are made, want things to change.

match society The compulsory vocational course for intending harristers tem live.

formerly offered only in the High court judges earn £103,000 a year plus

Inns of Court in London is now available elsewhere. The Bar Council this week publishes a new equality code. A clearing system operates for entry into barristers' chambers which, in

principle ought to make it easier for those with-

out connections to make it in the law. It's not quite a legal revolution. Of 8,390 practising barristers 282 are self-identified as black. There are 61 women QCs, up from only 50 two years ago. (There are 957 male QCs, up from 845 two years ago.) The pool from which future judges will come is broader but only hy

There are good reasons why the social hackground of the judiciary matters. One is that holders of power and authority ought roughly to match society at large in their composition;

and oppression.

For judges this has become a more pressing question as their role has become more politically controversial; they are doing things that require them to be more representative. This was what the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosforth, was getting at when he said that if the judges are going to get into public debates through the media they need to be more in touch. The implication, given Lord Taylor's own only slightly non-standard background. The hench, experts say, is unquestionably

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School, Pembroke College, Com-hridge), could be that idges need to be more like the rest of us.

There is a groundswell of opinion in favour of judges reviewing more government decisions by government ministers. It is because judges are heing drawn on to this

political terrain that Lord Taylor has given given his colleagues the green light to hold press conferences and make pub-

lic speeches.

The judges' repeated clashes with government and Michael Howard, the Home Secrement and Michael Howard, the darlings tary, in particular, have made them the darlings of the political left. The bible for the left used to be John Griffiths' The Politics of the Judiciary, which linked a series of anti-Labour court decisions in the Seventies with the socially restricted hackground of judges in the the higher courts.

The left's problem is that judges are still toffs but are now knocking down Tory government decisions. That show of independence seems to support Lee's argument that their background makes them beholden to no one.

There may be a fallacy in the argument that a bench with more women and more comprehensive school-educated judges will, as a

result, be more "liberal". "Look at working-class magistrates, they tend to be authoritarian," says the David Downs of the London School of Economics. "Black magistrates are harder on black

Unrepresentative as they are, judges have been changing their courtroom body language.

more modern and more open, even if its occupants still live in country houses. Sir Harry Woolf, Sir Stephen Sedley, Lord Browne-Wilkinson are widely regarded inside and outside the courts as class acts.

"A judge's hackground matof opinion in layour of they do undermines activism, with they do undermines ters far less than their skills in judicial reasoning," according to Professor Geoffrey Jowell of University College. London. "What is different is, for example, the degree of interaction hat there now is between Eng-

lish judges and the jurisprudence of other countries. They are in touch. Consensus says that judges are doing what

they do better than ever. The problem is that what they are starting to do is different, as it has to do with politics and decisions that in the past were reserved for those elected to public

"The issue is, how appropriate it is for judges to exercise political power," says Conor Gearty, reader in law at King's College, London, "But the solution to that problem is not to ensure there is a woman, a Catholic, a Sikh or a black person on the hench. It does not matter how representative judges are if what they do undermines the democratic

So you want to be a judge ...

David Walker reports

Age: You would be wise to have a few grey hairs before trying to cover them with a long curly wig. The average age of Heads of Divisions is 63; Crown Court judges are more than 57 years old

Race: Those from ethnic minorities shouldn't hold their breath. All 96 High Court judges are white. Out of 524 Crown Court judges, there are three Asians, two other non-whites and no blacks. It's a wonder the Commission for Racial Equality doesn't look into the judiciary.

Gender: If you're a woman, you could always hope. But it is largely a boys' club. There are no women among 12 Lords of Appeal in Ordinary and five Heads of Division. One woman figures among 32 Lord Justices of Appeal. There are seven women out of 96 High Court judges and 29 women among 524 Crown Court judges.

Education: Non-Oxbridge? Fear not. The breeze of change is gently blowing here. Half the Crown Court judges have non-Oxbridge backgrounds. On the other hand, the High Court judiciary is nearly 80 per cent Oxbridge. Make Lord Mackay your role model; he was 100 per cent non-Oxbridge - for his first degree, at least.

Pay: This may come as a shock, especially if you were previously a high-flying solicitor or barrister. Brace yourself as your salary to \$75,978. for Crown Court duties. Become a senior circuit judge and it rises to £88,266. You can afford to loosen your belt a little as a High Court judge (£103,425). The best you can hope for (as Lord Chancellor) is £132,906 and the grateful respect of the nation.

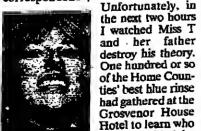
Perks: Don't expect enormous bonuses or share options. But do expect a justice's clerk (secretary), a lovely big black car and driver to take you to the court, about five months' break each year, the security of knowing that no judge has ever been sacked, a reasonable pension, and the chance of a gong on retirement. If you are doing your judging away from home, you can also look forward to being put up in one of the luxurious judges' lodgings dotted around the country. Lord Mackay has his eye on spending these days, but in 1994 the taxpayer spent £3,303 per judge per week on lodging costs.

Ben Summers and Ramola Talwar

'Biographer tells all' shock

Just why did Carol Thatcher write the biography of her father? Easy, confided Lord Deedes at yesterday's Foyles literary hunch, which he chaired to honour Miss T. "My theory", he said. "is that Carol wrote the book because she felt her father ought not to be known only by the Dear Bill letters in *Private Eye*."

Not an unreasonable assumption. And as the eponymous recipient of the correspondence, he should know.



I watched Miss T and her father destroy his theory. One hundred or so of the Home Counties' best blue rinse had gathered at the Grosvenor House Hotel to learn who the man behind the

gin-soaked buffer of the 19th hole really is. His daugher rose in a post-lunch flush to tell all - and when she sat down, we were not one jot the wiser.

"Denis and gin go together like Imelda Marcos and shoes," she declared. "In fact, when he was in Marseilles during the war, he had a go at making the stuff. He mixed it up in the bath, and a mouthful nearly hlew his head off! That was easily solved - he turned on the taps and watered it down. You've never watered a drink down since, have you, Dad? Ha-ha-ha.

Carol's abiding memory of Denis in Number 10, we learned, was of him "pouring strong ones for anyone who needed it", and in moments of crisis his voice would boom along the corridors

of power: "Let's get relaxed!" Denis, true to form, sat through this portrait of a benign and befuddled chap, smiling and sipping - and saying not a word. Precisely, in fact, the Denis of Dear Bill letters. Not that the blue rinse brigade seemed to mind especially the ladies who after seeing Denis Thatcher and Lord Deedes asked me

Judge a book by...

I fear I must add to the embarrassment of the women-only Orange Prize for fic-tion after two of the judges, the reviewer Val Hennessy and the novelist Susan Hill, were widely quoted as damning the general standard of entries. Ms Hennessy said: "I have seldom come across so many books that were so bad. Some were just drivel." Ms Hill added: "I have to be a bit careful, but I think I can say I thought the quality of entries was abysmal, terrible." The prize's adminis-trator, Kate Mosse, sees male conspir-acy in this. The male journalist who wrote the original piece left out everything positive, she complained yesterday I asked the said male journalist

whether he was a sexist pig, whether he

was one of those who thought it odd and

year when women had won both the Booker and the Whitbread. Far from it. "I am not against the prize at all," he told mc. "I didn't even ask the two judges whether they thought the general standard was poor. They both came straight out and told me. I was amazed." It is interesting that both Ms Hennessy

and Ms Hill, with exactly the same phrase, regretted "that trees had to be cut down" for some books. Almost as if it was the very phrase used at the judges' meeting.

Presidential seat

A week is a long time in casy-to-assemhle furniture. An unlikely confrontation between the Russians and the Swedes is



photosis who need the occasional prompt

Something seems to have gone away with the publicity material for the opening of the Minerya Theatre season at Chichester next month. The opening production will be the world premiere of Simply Disconnected by Single Grid. The producer will be Duncan Weldon. The leaflets mention interpolation of vertexyear. Otherwise Engaged, but unusually, there is no macritime at all of this the atrical onting, which also had Weldon as produced as history witten out of the atrical instory? Just so Chichester Disconnected with Gray's couvre, I can remord them what the publicity material forgot. Into last work was Cell Mates, starring Stephen Fry (More) thought not, also, for very long.

patronising to instigate the prize in a taking place in Paris, on the subject of an advertising campaign by the Swedish furniture store Ikea. To advertise the opening of a new store to the east of Paris – it already had stores to the north, west and south – Ikea used a big pho-tograph of Mikhail Gorbachev, accompanied by the words: "Everything is changing quickly in the east" and the date of the new store's opening. A further poster, also with Gorbachev's pho-tograph, says: "In the east everything is now just the same as in the west."

It does not matter

how representative

judges are if what

the democratic

process

After approaches from the Russian embassy. Ikea has had to issue a disclaimer, stressing that the posters were not construed in any way as part of the Russian presidential election campaign, in which Mr Gorbachev will be a candidate.

Down Mexico way

Why was Sir James Goldsmith given a happy 20-minute slot on Breakfast with Frost on Sunday? Could it be anything to do with the fact that David Frost had spent the Easter break chez Goldsmith at his Xanadu-style mansion in Mexico?

Money for old coke

I'm pleased to see that the East Enders actress Daniella Westbrook has rectified the appalling tabloid slur that she spent £100,000 on cocaine. The 22-

year-old who plays Sam, a barmaid, tells the May edition of Loaded magazine: "It was my money and not even the £100,000 that was reported, it was closer to £50,000 ... The most I ever spent in an evening was £600." That's a relief. For a moment there I thought the publicly funded BBC might be overpaying its soap opera starlets.

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Farewell Fergie

The manner of their leaving one another becomes them. The cool and practical tone in which the divorce of the Duke and Duchess of York was announced demonstrated something their marriage has lacked.

The Ducbess bas at last behaved with a modicum of dignity - a quality that was so sadly lacking in much of her behaviour. By relinquishing the title of Hcr Royal Highness she acknowledges that Sarah Ferguson and "royalty" never quite went together. She can no longer use HRH as a key to unlock book deals and see ber on to the top table at charitable fund-rais-

ing events.

The couple's timing was probably apt.
too, getting residual nastiness out of the
way to allow the Queen to celebrate ber 70th birthday in the knowledge that no further family bombsbell is about to burst. This week at least. This is probably the high point for the royal divorce lawyers. There are now only the three royal divorces running in parallel, Sarah and Andrew, Marina Ogilvy and her husband and Charles and Diana.

The Yorks' divorce is a formality. Since their separation they appear to have calm and affection than they managed in

the last years of their troubled marriage.

In itself their divorce affects neither the general condition of the Royal Family nor the Queen's desperate need to steer it into calmer water. It may help the House of Windsor slowly engineer a recovery in its fortunes. The decks having been cleared a little. Perhaps the Princess of Wales may take note of her sister-in-law's capacity both to reach a settlement with her for-mer bushand and then to announce it with some style. But that far trickier divorce

As for the Duke, so strangely absent from the public gaze in recent months, we can only wish him well, noting that be has a role to play in restoring his family to public favour. The key to that is to follow Princess Anne's model of quiet, dutiful public service at low cost and minimum embarrassment to the taxpaver.

That is the message the royals must take from the sorry time they bave had in the Nineties. Significantly, it seems to have reached Prince Charles, who is recruiting a team of fund-raisers for his Prince's Trust with the aim of making it the main inner-city charity in the country. That would be a further step on the road back to good reputation, but it will be a

Still roasting

The drift back to beef has started. Consumers have begun to cross the picket lines in their minds and return to the beef shelves. Helped by low prices, sales of beef are back to 85 per cent of their level before the BSE scare began. Yet the industry is still in trouble.

Slaughterhouses hold unsold meat worth £132m. The barons in Brussels are sticking to their export ban: nary a roast beef and mustard sandwich can leave British shores. Listen and you will hear the entire beef industry, from farmers to slaughterhouses, meat processors to

exporters, screaming with pain.
Enter Douglas Hogg, Faced with an unresolved crisis of consumer confidence and an industry still collapsing around his cars, one might have expected the Secretury of State for Agriculture to unveil a strategy to restore confidence and demand. Some hope,

Yesterday he announced just a hit more compensation for farmers and slaughterhouses. Almost a month after the scare began, the Government's main strategy is to keep the beef industry going in the hope that British and European shoppers will change their minds. This may be sufficient to bring the crisis

to an end, but only with some luck. Ministers have already announced a limited cull of beef cattle more than 30 months old. Elderly dairy cattle will he kept out of the food chain. Yesterday be announced plans for "quality assurance schemes" to clearly label beef from BSEfree herds. If beef sales are already back

ban may prove unsustainable too.

This optimism is likely to prove premature. In the long run demand will inevitably be affected by public perception

Moreover, this kind of approach suggests a dangerous government complacency about consumer concerns. It may not be easy for anyone to assess consumer attitudes except by waiting for their reaction delivered through the market. Yet we live in an age of consumer power; greater attempts to anticipate their concerns and respond swiftly to disquiet could save

As long as shoppers suspect that govand that no-one is standing up for their interests, crises in confidence and food scares are bound to blow up again. Splitting the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food into separate farming and consumer departments is only a start. Making it clear that consumers have a route into public policy making should help give more focus to their views. Consumers are powerful and volatile beasts, as the Government learnt to its cost this month. It would be wise to show them more respect.

to 85 per cent of their pre-scare level, a few more months may bring them back to normal, as consumers become bored of the boycott and inured to the risk. EU officials have already been heard to concede that British beef is safe; so the export

of the safety of the industry. Enough families across Europe have been unnerved by the BSE scare to stay away from British beef for a long time to come.

On a trip to Israel last summer, I visited towns in northern Israel to have blown himself up in Jerusalem while preparing another bomb that could have and was shocked at the way that the Israeli civilians were used to everyone a lot of heartache. the danger. I was even witness to a rocket attack, hearing a boom

it was a Katyusha. Israel's homhardment of southern Lebanon is an attempt to show Hizbollah that it will not allow Israeli civilians to be at daily risk.

not just a military operation. It is an attempt to smash a country". 15 April). I was angered to read

the following paragraph:
And in the real world of Lebanon

the simple question has to be asked. Would the Israelis have

embarked on such a massive

military operation at such enor-

mous cost, just to avenge the wounding of five Israelis by Katyusha rockets, an assault that

was itself retallation for the

that Hizbotlah have been firing the rockets at northern Israel for

killing of a Lebanese youth.

I wonder if Mr Fisk is aware

ALEXANDER COWAN (Aged 17) Elstree,

Hertfordshire

Sir: On reading Robert Fisk's Sir: Any reader of your newspaper, report from Lebanon ("This is would be led to believe that the destroy a defenceless country, and a group of innocent people, for no reason whatsoever. Unfortunately, people have short memories.

The group which the Israelis are targeting in Lebanon are a group of terrorists. They are linked in purpose with those who send men into Israel to commit suicide in order to kill as many innocent victims as possible. Over the last few months, these groups have created a reign of terror in Israel. They have brutally murdered and injured civilians on buses, in cars and in a husy shopping centre. On Friday, another potential suicide bomber appears

killed more people. the Middle East.

The new Lebanese government has failed to prevent the constant bairage of Katyusha rockets that have been targeted on northern Israel. If the situation was reversed and the IRA was bombing huses and

constantly throwing Katyusba the Israeli position. Here we have will it all end? The international would be led to believe that the rockets into your backvard, would Israeli government is trying to you encourage the British government.

- LETTERS TO THE EDITOR -

'Grapes of Wrath': Lebanon pays the price for Israel's security fears

NAOMI KATZ

Sir: Operation "Grapes of Wrath" was launched by Israel with the objective of hringing a balt to rocket attacks on northern Israel by Hizbollah and not, as Robert Fisk asserts, for the purpose of demonstrating to President Assad what happens to those who do not want to make peace with Israel.

1956, 1967 and 1973 have already demonstrated quite adequately the consequences of waging war

London NW11

a peace-keeping organisation that sion of the conflict far beyond the is trying to maintain peace within border area, is both the gravest menace to regional stability since Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait and could sound the death-knell for any

> international response, including that of the British government, seems predisposed to legitimise

DENNIS POTTERS KARAOKE

ACOLD LAZARUS

The Arab-Israel wars of 1948,

hope of a comprehensive peace.

But as in 1993 the general

a defensive operation employing only pinpoint strikes against the "terrorists", while avoiding col-lateral damage (slaughtered civilians) wherever possible. If not actually members of Hizbollah,

the villagers of south Lebanon are surely lending their tacit support to the enemies of peace? If wounded women and children are reckless enough to ride in a Hizbollah ambulance, how can the Israeli gunners know this? Last April, I travelled from Beirut to Sidon and Tyre. Although

in a country regarded as a chief historical villain, I was confronted only with friendship and hospitality from people desperately trying to rebuild a shattered, but naturally beautiful country.

The few individuals with a

good word for Hizbollah - and these were poor Shia Muslims -The Israelis are in an impossi- Sir: Israel's escalating bombard- saw them only as a buffer against occupied zone. If civilians were no longer vulnerable to cross-border attack, the Hizbollah umbrella would become superfluous.

RICHARD SOCKETT

Sir: After throwing out Palestinians from their homes, it is now

the turn of the Lebanese. Where

community should look at the behaviour of Israelis and tell them in no uncertain terms that enough is enough. Our Defence Secretary's

HEAT

attempt to support Israel is condemnable. "It is the right of every country to have security and defend herself," says Michael Portillo (report, 16 April). What about the right of Lehanon? Does not Lebanon have the right to its security, which is now threatened by Israel by its bomb-

The destruction of power stations in Beirut, the emptying of villages of their inhabitants, and punishing civilians for the so-called "terrorist" acts of Hizbollah cannot he termed

> SHAIKH MOHOMMAD Croydon, Surrey

Lebanon smack of the worst kind of cynicism. If it is a response to Lebanese resistance against Israeli occupation, then it is out of all proportion. Since it is an electioneering ploy the Lebanese are, yet again, being made to pay for other countries' internal problems.
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Live Fig.

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The Flick fiasco

The University of Oxford is a world-class educational institution. At its best it is a civilised and civilising place. But sometimes it behaves stupidly. That is the only judgement to be made of its mishandling of the Flick endowment to pay for a chair in European thought. The affair has exposed Oxford's creaking bureaucracy, which operated in this case with little logic and less consistency.

It has never been easy to spot the strict tests Oxford has applied to its donors. The Rhodes scholarships, which are a central feature of Oxford life, are founded upon the fortune Cecil Rhodes made in southern Africa by methods no well-meaning liberal would endorse. Oxford's fund-raising campaign in America took money from all quarters.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM

THE BOARD OF BEEFTRACK

directors and board of BEEFTRACK

hereby declare that they are putting

on sale to the public shares in the com-

pany known as BEEFTRACK, which

cannot lose money in the future owing to very special and meaningful rela-

tionships with the Government, which

we cannot spell out FULLY in case

anyone from the Labour Party should

read it and raise some intelligent

objections, unlikely though that seems.

BEEFTRACK do hereby authorise

that a sum of money not less than, oh,

let's say £50,000, be paid to Miles King-

ton Esq for the privilege of using his

column as a free publicity area for the

forthcoming sale of shares in Beeftrack.
PROSPECTUS

company formed by the Government

using taxpayers' money but making a

profit only for itself and the Tory party.

take all loss-making industries such as

the railways, the beef industry, the

water industry, the newspaper indus-

try, the book industry, you name it.

even the Tory party itself, and leave

them in such a mess that the incom-

ing Labour government will suffer

from such difficulties that it will not

2. The purpose of Beeftrack is to

1. Beeftrack is a publicly owned

Therefore the board and directors of

Oyez, oyez! Be it known that the

The opponents of the Flick endowment say none of that counts because this case is different. Dr Gert-Rudolf Flick's grandfather was a Nazi war criminal who made a fortune exploiting slave labour during the Second World War. Oxford might have rejected it but it took the money. Once criticism emerged, it might have defended the endowment by arguing that the origins of the money mattered far less than what was done with it. Instead Oxford delayed and wrung its hands. Dr Flick has decided to take his £350,000 elsewhere.

It is Oxford's loss. The university emerges from the affair with no credit. The vice-chancellor, Peter North, is leading an inquiry into the way the university is run. The Flick affair should tell him just bow urgent reform is.

be able to last more than a year.

madeap schemes as:

organisations;

3. Therefore, using money raised by

a) plunging the food industry into

disarray by slaughtering all available

h) plunging the world of rugby union into disarray by ordering the

slaughter of all rugby administrators

c) plunging the rail industry into dis-

d) plunging the art world into dis-

array by letting the Royal Opera

House go head over beels into debt

e) promoting jealousy at all levels

by giving ludicrously large sums of

money to all outgoing heads of state

organisations or quangos, and even

and then half-bailing it out;

array by fragmenting it into an un-workable patchwork of conflicting

this share issue, the directors of Beef-

track propose to indulge in such

Buy now, let Labour pay later!

Outlaw the classroom cowboys

at risk by parasite teacher agen-cies", 12 April) reports NASUWT fears of children at risk from cowboy teacher agencies. As an agency founded on an ethos of service and professionalism, we share these fears.

TimePlan Education Group was the first and is the largest of the independent agencies providing temporary teaching staff to schools. Five years ago, we first approached the Education Department with a proposal either to regulate or draw up a code of conduct for agencies. Three years ago, we met officials with our professional advisers, Price Waterhouse, with a workedout scheme to police the service. Last year, we asked the

greater sums to all private heads;

ordering ludicrously expensive bypasses to be built round places like Newbury;

g) giving out huge sweeteners to anyone who buys shares in Beeftrack;

4. What, you may well ask, is the point of Beeftrack making a lot of

trouble in the country by mucking up

6. To make a hell of a lot of money.

8. Hold on a moment and we'll tell

9. You see, it's a hundred to one

that even if the economy upturns and

inflation vanishes and we all feel very

good indeed, the Tories will still lose

12. But they are not total idiots.

time the crying need for a change,

which means that come the next elec-

tion they will vote the Tories out.

14. And Labour in.

Tories out.

13. And the public has felt for some

15. The voters don't particularly

want Labour in, they just want the

16. Even if the only alternative gov-

ernment was Ray Illingworth and Tories get back inl

10. The voters are not fools.

11. Well, yes, they are foots.

the rail system, beef industry, etc?

probably get the idea by now.

5. We'll tell you.

7. How?

the next election.

h) offering bribes to ... but you

Sir: Fran Abrams ("Children put at risk by parasite teacher agen-

A strong code of conduct is long overdue. The Department for Education and Employment has a draft code which we understand is ready to be issued, and we last spoke to their officials three months ago to try to move matters on.

The code will cover all suppliers of temporary staff including local government. This is an essential element, since we see our rejected applicants working through both LEA and independent supply offices. CHRIS KING

Director of Education TimePlan Education Group London N3

the English cricket team, they would

so nightmarish for the incoming gov-

ernment that in a year or two the elec-

torate will, as usual, forget all the

horrors of the Tory years and vote the

18. At which point Beeftrack shares will rocket and we can all sell out and

and took after yourself tomorrowl

19. So huy Beeftrack shares today

20. Beeftrack is a wholly owned

21. The Tories are sometimes

22. But with Beeftrack we are look-

23. And looking after number one!

24. What about the country, you ask? 25. Never mind about that – what's

27. Well, not sense exactly, but a lot

28. Remember, where shares are con-

28. And remember, where govern-

cerned, what goes up may come down.

ments are concerned, what goes in

29. Buy Beefirack shares now ...

30. And see you again when the

good for Beeftrack is good for the

26. You know it makes sense.

17. So our idea is to make things

still vote the Tories out.

Tories back in again.

accused of short-termism.

ing way, way ahead!

make a fortune!

Tory set-up.

country!

of money.

must get in again!

Wakeful baby? No problem

Sir: I was worried for any new mothers on reading your article "Help me make it through the night" (18 April). Although there is sound advice concerning bedtime routines, I would vehemently question the implication throughout the article that those parents who respond to their child's cries in the night have a

problem". Babies' cries are specifically designed by nature to elicit a response in their parents, a rather clever device to ensure their survival. The bormonal changes in a woman on becoming a mother, especially if she is breastfeeding, ensure that ignoring her baby's

cry feels like torture. Perhaps we need to look at the subject from a completely different angle. Perhaps we need to accept the fact that when a baby wakes alone in the dark night, it feels frightened, needs its mother and wants her to stay. Perhaps this is normal bealthy behaviour, showing a strong survival instinct. and we should be proud that our baby is so smart. Perhaps we

need to accept that parenting is a joh that doesn't stop for a stretch of seven hours out of every 24, and maybe it is during those most frightening night-time hours that our bahies need our

presence most. An alternative answer to the problem from my own experience is: sleep with your baby and breastfeed on demand throughout the day and night. Sounds like hard work, hut paradoxically you will not be too disturbed in the night after the first few months, as your baby settles in to the security of knowing you are always there and night feeds gradually

Eventually, mother and baby are so synchronised that you perform the night-time tasks in your sleep, and greet in the morning not knowing whether the baby awoke in the night or not. The result is a much more relaxed experience for both mother and child, and the rewards of loving and intimacy can't be described.

St Albans, Hertfordshire

Britain's role in Short road to a world politics Labour victory

Sir: Hamisb McRae ("Why Britain would fare better on the fringe", 12 April) wishes for a looser association with the EU. Perhaps, in economic terms, he is right. He cites Austria, Sweden and Switzerland as able to maintain a high living standard under such circumstances. He does not mention that these countries enjoy one advantage that our politicians of both major parties have ignored for the past half century. They do not attempt to act as world powers.

If we do follow the path advocated by Mr McRae, we should renounce all efforts to play any major role in world politics, and become professional neutrals, like them.

Failing that, there are two long-term courses open to us: to help huild a new kind of Europe or to become another state of the American Union.

JAMES DAY Cambridge

STEPHANIE DAVIES-ARAI

Sir: I was glad to read Clare Short's comments on taxation and even more pleased by ber declaration that she had cleared them with herself ("Blair's joy cut short by new tax row", 15 April).

I would like Tony Blair and Peter Mandelson to know that so long as Clare Short is in the Shadow Cabinet I feel that I will have some reason to vote Labour at the next election. I would urge them both to make full use in Labour's campaign of her weapons of truth and honesty. LINDSAY MELLER

Southampton

Turkey's gold

Sir: Was King Priam a German? The Trojan gold belongs in Turkey if anywhere ("Trojan gold fuels rift over war treasures". 16

JOHN MOLE

Where blame lies for airport fire

Sir: Having had the misfortune to be inside Düsseldorf airport when fire broke out last Thursday, I was concerned to read (12 April) that the high death toll is being hlamed on "people in the terminal panicking and ignoring instructions to use the fire exits". suspect that an attempt is being made (co-ordinated or otherwise) to distract attention from the inadequacies of the airport's fire precautions and emergency The crucial questions that will

have to be answered at the inevitable inquiry include: 1. Why were the fire alarms ever sounded?

2. How was smoke from a fire in one section of a very large building able to fill the entire building within five minutes of the fire's outbreak?

3. Why did it take the airport fire brigade at least 10 minutes to reach the terminal from their fire station which lies only 500 metres

4. Why was a large and often densely populated public build-ing not fitted with a sprinkler system?

With so many important questions still unanswered it is pre-mature of the authorities to place blame at the feet of those unfortunate enough to bave been caught up in the catastrophe.

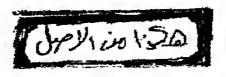
PETER STATHAM Maidenhead, Berkshire

Angel of power

Sir. Why not let the wings of the giant Gatesbead statue (Letters, 13 April) turn in the wind? Their movement could generate free electricity for the local community. That would surely reduce the negative feelings.

ALAN C PICKWICK Sale, Cheshire

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@ independent.co.nk) Letters may London SE24 be edited for length and clarity.



The vilified social worker who claimed Ecstasy is relatively safe should be praised for being sensible

The lynch mob was still at the door baying for blood yesterday when I talked to Mary Harmoll, Glasgow's support of her council leader, she is director of social work. She has just endured the full wrath of the media after her internal memo about drugs to the chief executive of Glasgow City Council was leaked. She says ruefully, I would never have expected this furore," but others could have warned her. Public people cannot speak hon-estly about drugs and hope to live. Paul Betts, father of the Ecstasy vic-

tim Leah Betts, was first among her critics, calling her "totally irresponsible" and "absolutely stupid", claiming she had set back his campaign by a decade. The local Labour MP. George Foulkes, declared himself "absolutely astonished by ber comments. Tory MPs jumped in with glee. The Glasgow board that licenses clubs and pubs, about whom she was writing, retaliated by claiming that her remarks "flew in the face" of everything they were doing to stamp out drugs. From the reaction caused by her letter, you might imaghe she had called for heroin to be on

ale in primary school canteens. What she actually said was straightforward, factual and sensible. "The irony is that Ecstasy, for example, is a relatively safe drug - risk of death has been calculated as one in 6.8 million (the risk of dying of aspirin is very much greater) - and young people tend to know this. For every highly publicised death, those who use reg-ularly balance their experience of their own and friends' experience of frequent, safe and enjoyable usage."

)[].

Admirably, she stands by what she

support of her council leader, she is plainly aghast at what has befallen her. After all, she is not some trendy new arrival but a 56-year-old who has been a director of social services since 1978. She speaks from a depth of experience of running social services in several areas, and now in Glasgow with its many drug rehabilitation pro-

grammes and anti-drug campaigns.
This is the story: undergoing local
reorganisation, Glasgow council, like many other areas, is in the throes of drawing up new policies in new com-mittees. The controversy started when the Glasgow Licensing Board initiated a hardline anti-drugs policy in the granting of licences to clubs and dance

In her letter she was not suggesting anyone should be soft on drugs. "Tough law enforcement is essential," she says. But she was calling for higher safety standards. She wants all licensed dance clubs and events to provide chill-out areas and supply free water. There should be accurate information on drug misuse in these areas, with stewards trained in first aid in case anyone collapses. These "harm reduction measures" are designed to reduce the number of collapses or deaths caused by over-heated dancers on Ecstasy. But the licensing board rejected this proposal, as it seemed to them to be a tacit acceptance, or even approval of young people in these clubs taking drugs. Mary Hartnoll was writing a memo to try to persuade the council to overturn the board's wrote and she has not been panicked intransigence, in the name of safety.



Public people cannot speak honestly about drugs and hope to live

These "harm reduction measures" were drawn up by a working party two years ago, set up by the Secretary of State for Scotland following the tragedy in the Hanger 13 nightclub in Ayr, where three young people died after taking Ecstasy. If the aim of drug policy is to reduce the number of deaths, then these measures are widely

regarded as life-savers. But the licensing board's refusal to introduce them reveals another agenda lurking just beneath the surface in much official thinking or nonthinking about drugs. This agenda suggests people should be punished for taking drugs because drug taking is in itself wicked - and it frightens the life out of older people who have never encountered it. The public is encouraged to panic at the very word "drug" and mass hysteria drives out

reason. So the vital difference interfere with their jobs or education. hetween "relatively safe" and extremely dangerous drugs disappears in a cold sweat of terror, as evi-dence and facts are east aside. There has never been a recorded death from cannabis, so prosecuting 56,000 people a year for it blurs the crucial difference between such "relatively safe" drugs and those which destroy not only their users, but also to the community around them.

Miss Hartnoll was blasted for saying Ecstasy is "relatively safe", but those words are used by most of the expens, including the man who collates most information on Ecstasy deaths, Dr John Henry of the National Poisons Information Service. It is not safe, he says, for no widely used drug is safe. He fears it may cause increased depression in later life, but as drugs go, E is "relatively safe". Nothing like as dangerous as drink and tobacco, for instance, and three time raore people die of paracetemol, while thousands more young people die driving their

Miss Hartnoll says the young know a great deal about drugs - though often not enough. The "Leah Betts -Sorted" posters invite disbelief from a generation where millions take it every Saturday night without obvious had effect. She says a recent survey in Glasgow - the city with the most drug deaths, at 100 per year - found half the young women and two thirds of young men took drugs. Six per cent were on heroin, 8 per cent on cocaine or crack - frightening numbers. But for the great majority taking soft drugs was a recreational social activity that did not

(By far the commonest drug was

So in the face of this widespread drug-taking, what kind of effective anti-drug warnings do you issue? "Just Say No" doesn't work, but Miss Hartnoll says, "honesty matters if you want to be believed."

Now she is setting out to persuade her new council to adopt a practical and realistic approach. She says what worked best in the past was a scheme called Operation Eagle, which comhined tough law enforcement against drug dealers by the police, a health promotion campaign with truthful information about comparative risks, and good youth clubs involving local adults. Undaunted, she believes she will persuade the council to overturn the Licensing Authority's rejection of harm reduction measures in clubs. However, people like her who talk

honestly about drugs can expect nothing but trouble. It is not OK to suggest that millions of young people take drugs at the weekends and suffer tess than they would from a heavy night in the pub. It is not OK to point out that no Ecstasy or cannabis-crazed madmen smash bottles in each other's faces at closing time. Anyone in authority even hinting at this these facts can expect the same bucketful of media ordure that was dumped on Mary Hartnoll in recent days. Drugs are an increasingly important aspect of our national life, and yet none of our law makers or law enforcers are allowed to debate the facts openly: across the parties lips zip, jaws clamp, eyes shut and ranks close,

Kafka at large in Clwyd

The Welsh Secretary must rescue a child abuse report from the shredder, says Rhodri Morgan

leagues have spent most of the past two years drawing up a 300-page report on the ehild abuse scandal in Clwyd, North Wales. Clwyd County Council commissioned it. It cost more than £500,000 to compile.

If William Hague, the Secetary of State for Wales, doesn't step in soon, all copies of the report, even including Jillings's own copy, will be hauled back to Shire Hall, Mold, and fed through the county council's paper shredder. Is there any hope for child protection if our political system allows Kafkaesque acts of mass evidence destruction?

Mr Hague has been sent a copy. If he places it in the Library of the House of Commons, not only is the report saved from the shredder, but MPs can read it, debate it, copy chunks of it, quote from it and generally ensure that the right essons are learned. How important is the report?

On the child-abuse Richter scale, Clwyd must rate much higher than the Staffordshire Pindown scandal and the Frank Beck case in Leicestershire. Seven men have heen con-victed of paedophile offences. committed while they were working in children's homes in Clwyd. None received sentences of less than four years.

The criminal trials did not and could not look at the patterns and linkages, neither between the defendants themselves, nor with any wider paedophile rings. That was why the then Chief Constable of North Wales, David Owen, called for a judicial inquiry on September 1992. That was also why, three days later, the Welsh Office minister responsible for bealth and social services issued a statement saying: "I have concluded that a public inquiry is necessary to consider the matter fully."

The only caveat was that the inquiry could not start until the criminal trials were finished, hut when they did, something curious happened. Nicola Davies QC was commissioned to advise, after an "examination of relevant papers held by the various agencies concerned, whether an inquiry is required".

Her conclusions were that inquiries were in her experience traumatic for all concerned and would not help Clwyd and Gwynedd to improve their present child care practice. She made no reference to the ministerial undertaking of Sep-

John Jillings, the former director of social services at Derbyshire County Council, and two distinguished columniations are distinguished columniation. The services are distinguished to the sware of it. In addition, the inquiry that she advised against. he aware or it. In author, the inquiry that she advised against. into whether Clwyd and Gwynedd were presently failing children in care, was much narrower than the one promised by the Welsh Office in September

:non,

The county council mean-time pressed ahead with its own inquiry, but without powers of subpoena and no access to North Wales Police files, nor to reports from the Welsh Office Social Services Inspectorate. But, there will, we all thought, at least be some kind of report into the scandal.

The gods who protect pae-

Should insurance companies be able to veto a report's publication?

dophile rings from investigation then came up with their most ingenious trick yet. Clwyd County Council was insured by Municipal Mutual. They had got into serious financial difficulties in 1991-92, partially because of huge payouts to children abused in Staffordshire and Leicestershire children's homes.

They were in an insurance limboland known as "solvent run-off, unable to write new business, but still meeting old claims. Clwyd County Council was itself to disappear on 1 April this year under local goveroment re-organisation. When semi-solvent insurance company meets disappearing county council, child protection is unlikely to come top of the

priorities. Should insurance companies have the ability to veto publication of independent reports into local government scan-dals? Westminster City Council has published its report into its own asbestos-ridden flatsfor-homeless-families scandal and is reported to be in serious difficulties with Commercial

Insurance companies' fears of adding to the number of claims is understandable. Child protection and open government are far more unportant. That is why William Hague must step in and save the Jillings report from the

The writer is the Labour MP for

Britain needs brainpower

Funding research in only a few key universities sounds unfair but makes sense, argues David Harrison

Research is the advancement of learning through the discovery of new knowledge, or of new associations between events or phenomena already known. It is original in nature and its greatest achievements enjoy a lasting and worldwide recognition. In short, it contributes to the quality of life.

The group I chaired - set up by the British Academy, the Conference of Medical Royal Colleges, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society—has concluded that for Britain to maintain its ability to conduct high-quality research, the funds available must be concentrated in relatively few universities. This may strike critics as not being fair, but it reflects an unavoid-

We in no way hide our concern that the UK is falling behind its major competitors

.

able fact: a critical lack of resources. Our group was asked whether the present university system has the research capability to deliver what is now being asked of it. We consulted very widely and the answer we must give is no. This follows inevitably from the abundant evidence we were given on: ■ The low proportion of the national GDP assigned overall in this country to research and development compared with that in other leading industrial countries. The quality of our university research is ultimately judged by

international standards. ■ The rising student/staff ratios – for example, from 13 to 19 students per member of staff in the humanities, and from 10 to 15 in engineering - which are squeezing the staff time so essential for high-quality research.

The serious rundown of university

infrastructure, including libraries, equipment and building maintenance. Our response to this situation could have been a vigorous and heartfelt call for more public expenditure on research, and in our report we in no way hide our concern that the UK is falling behind its major international competitors. We were nevertheless obliged - again on the evidence put to us - to face the painful likelihood that public funding per student will con-tinue to fall; and this would be on top of a 20 per cent fall in real terms in the five years to 1993-94. This decline greatly reinforces the pressure on universities to increase their other sources of research funding (eg, from charities, industry, the European Union and alumni).

It is easy to imagine what will go wrong. It will break down on the first day. Stunned by the view, a little

old lady will have a heart attack at the

top. A small IRA bomb will go off in

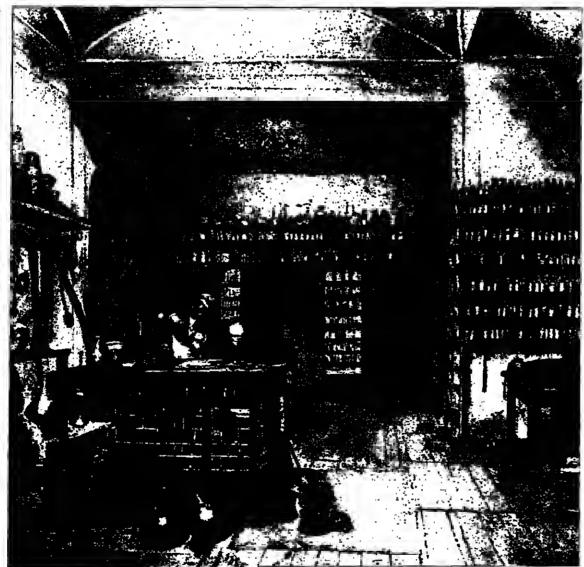
one of the gondolas, after which it will

opportunity to frustrate entrenched

interests who have set their faces

against London's propensity to change.

Lord St John of Fawsley, arch-



Michael Faraday, 19th century physicist: can British universities maintain the tradition?

Research money is not distributed uniformly across the 100 or so universities in the UK, and it never has

been. Originally, each year's distribution largely followed a historical pattern; but, since the first national research assessment exercise in 1986, and again in 1989 and 1992, the funding councils' distribution has been arrived at by peer review, which has sought to reward high-quality research. This has been judged by national standards (given research ratings of three or four) or international standards (rating five). The degree of concentration is now high, with more than 50 per cent of all research grant and contract income to

all universities in 1993-94 going to 15

universities. This selectivity of research

funding occurs not only with funding

councils but equally with research councils, charities and industry.

Our recommendationm, therefore, to increase concentration of research funds in a relatively few universities follows inevitably from the severe, long-term constraints on public funding, and the high cost normally associated with the achievement of high quality on the international stage. The degree of selectivity reflects the

lack of resources. A non-selective policy would of course be possible, and it is perhaps an easy option that some say would lead to a fairer system. But it is not the qualoption, nor the one the English Funding Council had in mind when it said in evidence to the Government's review of higher education last year: "For academic as well as economic reament to any university wishing to grow

sons, care should be taken to maintain a number of world-class institutions which compare internationally with the

very best universities in the world." We consider it is vital for the funding councils to develop methods that explicitly encourage a diversity of mission across a system of a hundred universities. Many academic staff are no longer in effect funded for research, and certainly not adequately, and it is deeply unsatisfactory that with only two available streams of money - one for teaching and the other for research -that all universities are forced to compete for research funds regardless of their insti-tutions mission. This pressure is heightened, particularly at the present time because the ceiling on the number of home and EU students is an impedistaff with more time to keep abreast of A non-selective policy would of course be possible, but it is not the quality option

in order to increase its teaching funds

funding methodologies are institu-

tionally inequitable, and they are fun-

damentally unstable in the long run if

universities are to be encouraged to

sustain missions for the benefit of soci-

ety that are both diverse and cost effec-

tive. We therefore see the need to cre-

ate a third stream of money, which we

call professional development and

teaching, targeted to university depart-ments that have student/staff ratios

above the national average and did not enter the research assessment exercise.

We seek in this way to reduce stu-

dent/staff ratios, to provide academic

The present teaching and research

their subjects and to better perform as effective university teachers. It may also be possible to contribute to the support of the professional activity of academic staff with, for example, library and lab-oratory materials for teaching, staff training and the cost of academic col-laboration with other institutions.

Where is the money for this third stream going to come from? If it cannot be found as genuinely new money to the university system, our preferred option would he to seek resources for professional development and teaching from present research funding at the lower end of the quality range, as judged by the research assessment exercises. For example, for the English universities in 1992, about £30m was allocated to units of assessment with the low rating of two, with that sum currently allocated almost equally between the old and the new universities.

The introduction of this new funding stream by raiding the existing research stream will not, of course, be universally popular, but we urge its serious consideration by the funding councils with, we hope, government encouragement in favour of diversity of mission, in order to meet the essential needs for high quality, equity between universities and the future financial stability of the university system as a whole.

The writer, Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, chaired a working group on university research by the British Academy, the Conference of Medical Royal Colleges, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society.

trast between the two sides of the river. It will grant Londoners and others the best imaginable views of the

Oxfam needs your help in Lebanon

Up to 400,000 people have fled the bombing of South Lebanon.

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A big wheel for London Peter Popham welcomes a bit of vulgarity on the river

remain, standing but unmoving and unusable, a monument to futility – like the rotating cafe in the Telecom fogey, recently appointed to a second term as chairman of the Royal Fine Tower, which closed permanently soon after it opened, following a Arts Commission, is dead against it. The 20th Century Society wants to bomb attack, and has remained stubfreeze the South Bank Art Centre's Arnly shut ever since. Some such eventualities are all too concrete brutalism just the way it is: they will be grashing their teeth over likely - and it is partly the chance of the marmalade this morning. All that's defying them that makes the giant South Bank Ferris wheel such an required is for the Prince of Wales to liken it to something grotesque - an old bicycle wheel hauled up from the attractive proposal. It is also a welcome

But the grounds are in any case very strong. As the architect Piers Gough has pointed out, there has always been a dichotomy between the dignitas of the Thames's North Bank-Parliament, Big Ben, Somerset House and so on - and the frivolity of the South Bank, with its art and theatre, its television studios and Oxo Tower. For centuries the contrast was much more stark than it is today, from the bear baiting of the riverbed by some unfortunate angler Globe and the flirtation and drunken-- and the grounds for pressing ahead will be overwhelming. ness at Vauxhall Gardens to the roller coasters of Battersea Fun Fair.

In recent times, the contrast has become blurred: the bears, the gardens and the fun fair are all gone, the brutalism, so daring in its day, has become respectable; the new Tate planned for Bankside Power Station promises an infusion of high Modernist worthiness, never a recipe for fun and games. The only dollop of frivolity, confusingly, is Terry Far-rell's tumescent Charing Cross station, on the north side.

The giant wheel will help to restore this interesting and meaningful con-

and a view of the task before us.

will give a lift to the new millennium

city - views previously available only to those with access to helicopters. It will bring visitors flocking back to a quarter that, for all its centrality, too often threatens to slide into decrepitude and irrelevance. One cavil: is the form of the latest version of the wheel not a little too

refined, a little too High Modernist? We don't want BA logos (corporate flag-waving should be confined to the inflight magazine and the sick bags) but a little more pizazz, a little more vulgarity would be in order. It's an exag-geration to say that the wheel will restore London to its citizens: no mere structure can do that. But its presence

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vill

obituaries/gazette

Louis Osman

Louis Osman sparked on many cylinders. He was architect. goldsmith, draftsman, art historian and art patron. Most of all, he was a creator of genius.

He trained at the Bartlett School of Architecture, and studied drawing at the Slade School of Art. In 1935 he became FRIBA, winning a Donaldson Medal and a scholarship which in 1936 took him to Syria on a British Museum archaeology expedition. In the Second World War he was a major in Intelligence, involved in Combined Operations and the Special Air Service, and - perhaps the decisive event of his life - in 1940 he married Dilys Roberts: she became his enamellist as well as his unswerving supporter, the lifelong steadying influence on his mercurial

As architect, Osman began in Sir Albert Richardson's office, learning there the grammar of ornament, and the basis of architectural good manners, a deht to Richardson which he always generously acknowledged. His own ideas were more original than Richard-son's, but he used to point with satisfaction at the new Jockey Club huilding in Newmarket, which he helped to design with Richardson, and which looks today as if it were a Georgian

By 1950, Osman was emerging in his true creative colours. He rehullt the two bombdamaged Georgian huildings on the north side of Cavendish Square in London which became the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, joined them with a new hridge, and commissioned Epstein's magnificent Madonna and Child for the central feature on the bridge. It was then that I came to know him well. partly because, with characteristic imagination, he asked the silversmith Philip Popham to make a small commemorative tablet to bury inside the masonry of the hridge, and I, already working at Goldsmiths' Hall in the City, was interested in any commissions for modern

warmth of his feelings for other artists, and the sensitivity of his appreciation of old buildings. He had asked his friend the sculptor John Skeaping which

sculpture ex-students from the Royal College of Art might be interested in a major public commission. Osman wrote to four promising youngsters, but they all replied they were too busy for a few months. Exasperated, he then wrote to Epstein, who was by then world-famous. Next morning. Epstein turned up on Osman's doorstep, and London's finest public sculpture was the result.

Osman enjoyed telling this story, to illustrate how spoilt and unrealistic some art students could become. He believed that all artists should snatch at any opportunity to undertake commissions, to satisfy a oractical need. He also liked to put this commission in its difficult context, describing the origins of the long vista from Cavendish Square down to St George's, a vista which the convent buildings and sculpture helped to en-hance. I realised the breadth of his learning.

Other big architectural com-missions included Ranston House in Dorset, involving an almost total rebuild of a Georgian mansion, which John Martin Robinson in his book Latest Country Houses (1984) calls "among the most distinguished and stylish houses created since the last war". Another big statement, now alas altered with the central court roofed in, was the Principal's Lodging at Newnham College, Cambridge, like a tiny Italian Renaissance palazzo, but with splendid modern stained glass, and big sculptures by Geoffrey Clarke.

Another success for Osman was his restoration of Staunton Harold church, in Leicestershire, for the National Trust. Perhaps more important was Shere church in Surrey, where his splended altar frontals and ornaments are still in use. He explained to me there how nearly all architects fail to discern correctly which parts of interior medieval walls were rendered with cement, which were intended to reveal the beauty of the bare stone.

Osman did not enjoy the new architecture of accurate I soon learnt from Osman the cost-accounting and quantitysurveying. He once worked for Sir Richard Seifert, doyen of this oew style of prefabricated office building. Osman told me how he had to hide beneath Seifert's

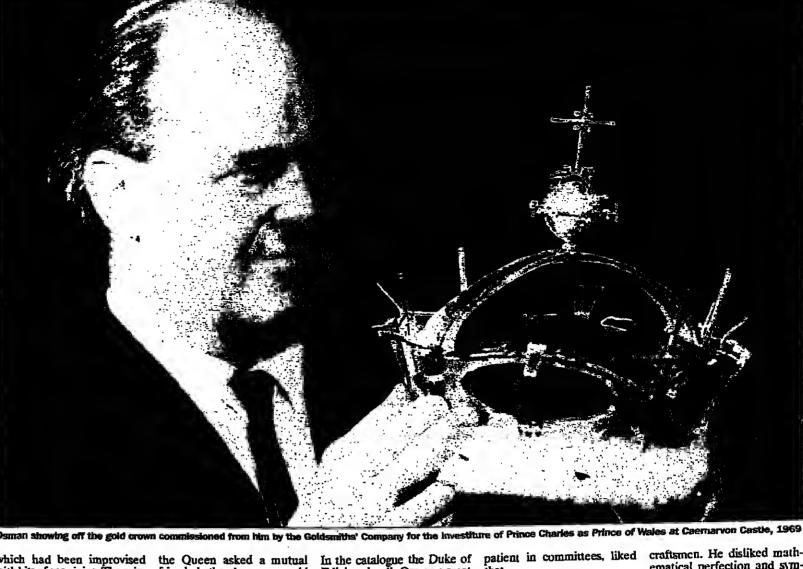
of angry visiting creditors; Osman was not the only British architect to incur money problems in the Sixties. Seifert later confirmed this anecdote to me, adding a charming postscript:
"Mr Osman," he said, "is the most creative man I have ever met."

Osman was the first to admit that he was a "lousy businessman", which is partly why his architectural practice did not flourish. He could be alarmingly honest with his clients. Graham Sutherland, the painter, wrote to him, "You are the only architect I know who can draw.' The result, alas, was that Osman spent more energy on his beau-tiful architectural drawings than he did on the equally vital costings. A friend once called Osman "the original hippie", meaning that his toving nature was not overloaded with material self-interest.

Osman made a huge, vision-ary scheme for Lord Roborough's model village striding across Dartmoor. For St John's Smith Square, Osman, supported by the Earl of Harewood and others, planned an interior with a ceiling by Picasso. Osman knew that the original Georgian architecture by Thomas Archer had not survived sufficiently to warrant what was eventually chosen, a reconstruction in a faked Archer style. For an extension to St Edmund Hall, Oxford, Osman dreamed of a tall cantilevered tower, an exciting addition to a famous skyline.

He loved details, and the artists and craftsmen who made them, and it was this love which eventually turned him into an amazing goldsmith. For Ladv Hollenden in Gloucestershire, he designed a green oak cantilevered spiral staircase 5ft wide. The engineering was difficult to make, the cost was difficult to estimate, hecause nothing like it had ever been made anywhere before. It was

For the Marchioness of Lothian at Melbourne Hall. Derbyshire, he restored the Georgian garden arbour by the blacksmith Robert Bakewell. He told me that a ton of paint was removed, and a thousand oew pieces of wrought iroo inserted to replace crude repairs



which had been improvised with hits of gas piping. The original colours were discovered and restored, and a masterpiece of ironwork was reborn.

He wrote, "In the past, peo-ple didn't mind if they made iewels or cathedrals; now, most architects would feel very let down if they had to make their wife a button." Osman moved out of masonry and into precious metals with grace and apparent ease. A symbolic link between these parallel careers of his was the first of the diocesan treasuries organised by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths in cathedrals, to house and display plate from the diocese; we commissioned Osman to design the treasury in Lincoln Cathedral. Again, in 1969, we commissioned him to make the crown which we presented to the Prince of Wales for his in-

the Queen asked a mutual friend whether the crown would be on time: "Certainly, ma'am," came the reply. "It will arrive at the very last moment, and it will be a work of high genius, but the artist may be covered in straw, and the floor of his van may be covered in cowpats."

The crown, now in the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, is deservedly the bestknown piece of new British gold of this century. It was made by a process still new for gold - electroforming - and it launched Osman's oew home, the huge Northamptonshire mansion Canons Ashby, where he now made his workshop with half a dozen helpers.

In 1971 came the triumphant Louis Osman Gold Exhibition at Goldsmiths' Hall, financed by various gold mining concerns, with the impressive total of 105 exhibits, oearly all made in Osman's favourite metal, gold.

Edinburgh cails Osman a great craftsman, which seems no less than fair comment. In 1973, Osman finished the first of his majestic series of medals, for the exhibition at Goldsmiths' Hall "Medals Today", including some inspired floor plans and profiles of cathedrals housing the Goldsmiths' treasuries, In 1974, Osman startled his neigh-

Canons Ashby, including several fine jewels which he had started to add to his vocabulary, sometimes for his neighbours like the Isham family. In 1958 he made a very heavy

bours with an extraordinary

one-man show of 131 pieces at

cast silver wine mug for Sir Henry Tizard to use at Goldsmiths' Hall. Tizard, slightly nonplussed by the weight of the mug, eventually found a word of praise for it: "It will be useful to throw at people in committee meetings, he declared. Osman, himself im-

One of Osman's first hig commissions had been in 1964, for a new high altar cross in Ely Cathedral. Graham Sutherland made the central crucifix. Sadly, the cathedral rejected this major work, which ended in Dallas Museum, after a spell with Emery Reves, the Sutherland collector, at Villa la Pausa outside Marseilles, Osman made the high altar cross for Exeter cathedral (now in St Gabriel's Chapel there); a lectern for the Victoria and Albert Museum; in 1976, the gold, eoamelled casket for Magna Carta, given by the British government to celebrate the Bicentennial, and now in the Capitol at Washington; and a long succession of magnificent,

provocative treasures for the collection at Goldsmiths' Hall. "Your work must show pas-sion," he used to say to his April 1996.

ematical perfection and symmetry: he always demanded personality and individuality. Once when I was with him, he was as usual explaining his ideas by drawing them. The pencil became blunt. What he was saying was so urgent that, instead of sharpening the point, he simply broke the whole pencil in half to reveal an

undamaged lead inside.

A blunt lead would not stop Osman's creative flow. Nor did his near-bankruptcy in 1979. when he left Canons Ashby and moved to Byford Court in Herefordshire, then to Harpton Court, in Powys.

Graham Hughes

Louis Osman, artist, architect, goldsmith, medallist: born Excter 30 January 1914: married 1940 Dilys Roberts (one daughter); died New Radnor, Powys II (3

Lord Brand

In the Scottish criminal community, word had it that great was the misfortune of the accused if they were to appear in the court of Lord Brand. "Anyone but him!" was the refrain. Indeed, on most occasions - but not all, because Brand was a discerning judge - he dished out heavy sentences, frequently

apparently ferocious sentences. As my constituent - he was not shy in raising his personal concerns, and those of the villagers of Dalmeny, where he lived in the old manse, with his Member of Parliament - I once asked him why he was the latter-day Judge Jeffreys of the Scottish legal system. The reply was far from the crusty, stock answer which might have been expected from the publicly perceived (but mistaken) image of a stuffy, out-of-touch, judge.

"It's like this, I suppose. Some of my most formative years were spent in the appalling conditions of Burma in the last years of the Second World War. I was one of the lucky ones: t was neither captured nor killed. But I saw a lot of good men who were and I just think that those for whom they have laid down their lives should jolly well behave themselves.

Those whom I have sent to Barlinnie or Saughton [the Edinburgh prison] do not know how lucky they are compared to those poor bastards despatched

to Changi gaol or the Japanese camps, and those who now lie in Taukkyan [the war cemetery in Rangoon] or Thanbyuzayat (the huge and moving Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery]."

Years later, when Brand was much in the public eye as the prosecuting counsel securing the second murder conviction of Donald Forbes, who had struck again within six weeks of being released on licence from his first life sentence, a gnarled old sergeant from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who came to my surgery on entirely different business said as he was leaving: "See, you Brand. He was a very hrave lad. Mind you he was clumsy too. Ought to have got an MC. Good officer when the chips were down.

This was an unsolicited testimonial from a man, himself a holder of the Military Medal, in a position to know.

It was perhaps indicative of Brand's spirit that he got himself seconded to the King's African Rifles and set ahout learning Swahili, a task well within the compass of one who had studied Classics for two vears at university when he entered Glasgow at 16. Forty years on Brand was to be honoured by being made a Judge of Appeal at the High Court of Botswana in 1994 partly on

account of his interest in and knowledge of the local

iff Substitute and Writer to the Signet in Dumfries, died when he was nine. His uncle financed his education at Stonyhurst College and throughout his life Brand was a staunch and devout Roman Catholic, contributing in particular to the parish life of St Margaret's Roman Catholic parish in South Queensferry. After the war, which he ended as a captain, he completed his legal studies at Edinburgh University, joined the Faculty of Advocates in 1948 and became Junior Counsel to the Department of Education for Scotland in 1951. This was invaluable experience when he was the minister

David Brand's father, a Sher-

who had to deal with the cause célèbre which rumbled on for a decade and more of the case of Malloch vs Aberdeen Corpora-tion which reached the House of Lords in April 1971 before Lords Reid, Morris of Borth-y-Gest, Lord Guest, Lord Wilberforce and Lord Simon of Glaisdale. It involved natural justice, public authority, dismissal of an employee, statutory protection, dismissal being invalid unless the employee was receiving not less than three weeks' notice of motion for dismissal and the whole question of teacher registration. Brand

was thought to have acquirted himself with distinction in such high-powered legal company.

vestiture in Caernarvon Castle.

After being Sheriff of Dumfries and Galloway and Sheriff of Roxburgh, Berwick and Selkirk he was appointed Solicitor-Geoeral in the Heath government. He led the evidence at the fatal accident inquiry into three major disasters. The first was at the Glasgow Rangers stadium when 66 football supporters were crushed to death when the crowd turned at the barriers hearing of a late goal. Secondly, Brand ted the evidence into a gas explosion at Clarkston in Glasgow which claimed the lives of 21 shoppers, and thirdly he dealt with the Cairngorm case when six schoolchildren perished in atrocious weather conditions

because of bad supervision. He was well known for his meticulous preparation, something that he bad learnt from Professor Sir Ernest Wedderburn, the distinguished Professor at Edinburgh University and founder of the legal firm of Shepherd and Wedderhurn, who had taken an interest in

Brand after his father died. Throughout his life Brand was supported by two strong and remarkable women. His first wife Josephine died in 1968 and his second wife Vera to whom he was married for 27 years had been Josephine's

(Charles) Leonard Woolley, ar-

chaeologist, 1880; Dame Margaret Teyte (Maggie Tate), soprano, 1888;

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, Russian leader, 1894; Thornton Niv-

hridesmaid at their wedding. In communication and meant that his memoirs, An Advocate's a soldier was away from his unit Tale (1994), Brand describes the arrangement whereby he was a government minister but oot a member either of the House of Lords or the House of Commons as being highly satisfactory, as he was able really to give his attention to the Crown Office side of a law officer's work without having to trudge up and down for parliamentary divisions. He was an ornament in the best sense of the word to the

Scottish legal system. Perhaps Brand's most lasting contribution will he for the work that he did as chairman of the Medical Appeal Tribunal from 1959 to 1970. As a constituency MP in those years representing ex-shale-miners and coalminers angry that their ucation for Scotland 1951; chronic broochitis did not en- Advocate-Depute for Sherifftitle them to pneumoconiosis benefits I was involved with Brand as chairman. Harsh he may have been in the criminal court, lenient and human he was in the medical tribunal. I asked him how he had become interested in medical problems.

Again it was back to Burma. The 14th Army had instituted Malaria Forward Treatment Units (MFTUs), which were in effect field hospitals tented, or more often in bashas, a few miles behind the forward edge of the battlefield. Such a system reduced the load on lines of

Cube took place at the Bay of Pigs

Dubcek was replaced by Dr Gustav

Husak as first secretary of the Com-

munist Party, 1969; in Cambodia, the

civil war ended after the capital, Ph-

oom Peoh, surrendered to the Khmer Rouge forces, 1975. Today is

1961; in Czechoslovakia, Alex

for considerably less time than would otherwise have been the case. Since for five months in every year (May to September) the monsooo bore down on the jungle in a monthly rainfall 10 times that of Ireland destroying roads and preventing air movement, these forward hospital units were most important.

Brand had a lot to do with this innovation and it started him on a lifelong interest in medico-legal problems.

Tam Dalyell

David William Robert Brand, judge: born Dumfries 21 October 1923; admitted to Faculty of Advocates 1948: Standing Junior Counsel to the Department of Ed-Court 1953; Extra Advocate-Depute for Glasgow Circuit 1955; QC 1959; Chairman, Medical Appeal Tribunal 1959-70; Senior Advocate-Depute 1964; Sheriff of Dumfries and Galloway 1968, Roxburgh, Berwick and Selkirk 1970; Solicitor-General for Scotland 1970-72; Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland (as Lord Brand) 1972-89; Judge of Appeal, High Court of Botswana 1994: married 1948 Josephine Devlin (died 1968; four daughters), 1969 Veronica Lynch (née Russell); died North Berwick 14 April 1996.



Brand: o latter-day Judge Jeffreys of the Scottish legal system

DEATHS

ALLSOP: On 15 April, peacefully in a London nursing home, Jonathan, aged 50 years. Beloved son of Mary Straw. Dear brother of Margarel Jennings. Loved and missed by his many friends. Funeral service at the Chapel in All Souls Cemetery, Kenmany friends. Funeral service at the Chapel in All Souls Cemetery, Ken-sal Green, London, on Friday 19 April, at 12 noon. Flowers to Lever-ton and Sous Ltd, Funeral Directors.

FAULKNER: Ceinwen (née Farrow), died 8 April 1996, following an acci-dent in the French Alps, Much-loved wife to Peter, daughter to Roy and Al-wyn, sister to Liz, Chris and Alan, and granddaughter. Funeral to be held at St Peter's, Ruddington, Nottingham, on Monday 22 April at 2.15pm. Friends and colleagues welcome. A memorial trust will be set up to assist with training of British mountain guides. No flowers please, but dona-tions to Midland Bank ple. Poultry and Princess Street, 40-05-30, a/c

KEOHANE: Kevin William, CBE KCSG, died suddenly on Saturday 13 April. Adored husband of Pat, a

Lectures

Victoria and Albert Museum: Imogen Stewart, "Early 17th-century Portrait Miniatures", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: James Malpas, "British Impressionism: a brush with light",

Births, **Marriages** & Deaths

wonderful father and grandfather, who will be missed by his many, many friends, Requiem mass on Thesday 24 April at 12 noon, The Sacred Heart Church, Edge Hill, Wimbledon, Family flowers only, donations may be made to Cafod or Jesuit Missions, c/o David Small, Funeral Directors, 169 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London

KI EIN: Josephine Partitt Klein died on 11 April, aged 67. Funeral (no black; small bunches of flowers only) will be held today at 81 Marylebone Crema-torium, East Finchley, at 11.30 am.

AMMONOCEMENTS for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS may be telephoned to 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

National Gallery: Gabriele Finaldi,

"Curators and Conservators (iii): Neapolitan School, The Adonnion of the Shepherds", 1pm.

British Museum: Barbara Brend

"Moghul Mosques and Tombs",

Birthdays Mrs Strimavo Bandaranaike, for-

mer prime minister of Sri Lanka, 80; Mr Chris Barber, jazz musician, 66; Mr John Barrett, tennis commentator, 65: Mr Norman Cowans, crickipal, St John's College, Durham, yachtswoman, 50; Mrs Anne Harris, former national chairman, National Federation of Women's Institutes, 71; Miss Olivia Hussey, actress, 45; Mr Henry Kelly, hroadcaster, 50; Mr James Last, bandleader, 67; The Hon Sir Humphrey Mand, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, 62; Mr Riccardo Patrese, grand prix driver, 42; Mrs Dora Saint ("Miss Read"), writer, 83; Mrs Eileen Stamers-Smith, former Head-mistress, Malvern Girls' College, 67; Dr Michael Stroud, explorer, 41; Sir Michael Vernon, chairman, RNLI, 70; The Right Rev John Yates, former Bishop of Gloucester,

Anniversaries

Births: John Ford, playwright, 1586; Henry Vaughan, poet, 1622; Vaclav Jan (Wenzel Johann) Tomasek, organist, pianist and composer, 1774; James Thom, sculptor, 1802; Vicat Cole, painter, 1833; John Pierpoot Morgan, financier, 1837; fan Hay (John Hay Beith), novelist, 1876; Sir

en Wilder, novelist and playwright, 1897: Lindsay Gordon Anderson, film, television and theatre director, 1923. Deaths: Marie de Rabutin Chantal, Marquise de Sévigné, writer, 1696; Benjamin Franklin, author, diplomat and scientist, 1790; Catherine Maria Fanshawe, painter and poet, 1834; James Thom, sculptor, 1850; Alexander Mackenzie, first Liberal prime minister of Canada, 1892; Kawabara Yasunari, novelist 1972: General Mark Wayne Clark, soldier, 1984; Scott Brady (Gerald Tierney), actor, 1985. On this day: at Dordrecht (Dort), Holland, the sea broke through the dykes, and over 100,000 people were drowned, 1421; Martin Luther was excommunicated by the Diet of Worms, 1521; the Act of Supremacy was partially re-enacted in England, 1559; the Republic of Guatemala was founded. 1839; the Empire Theatre, London,

opened as the Royal London Panora-

ma, 1870; Turkey declared war uo

Greece, 1897; the comic opera Tom

Jones was first produced, Loodon, 1907; Premium Savings Bonds were

introduced in Britain, 1956; in

Ghana, junior army officers made an

the Feast Day of St Aybert, St Donnan and Others. St Innoceol of Tortona, St Mappalicus and Others, St Robert of Chaise-Dieu and St Stephen Harding. David Band A service of thanksgiving for the life of David Band will be held on Tues-

day 14 May at Southwark Cathedral at 10.45am. Friends and colleagues are all welcome. Dinners

Saints and Sinners Club The Saints and Sinners Cluh Annual Dinner was held yesterday evening at the Savoy Hotel, London W1. Mr John Mortimer QC, Canon Roger Royle, Mr Cliff Morgan and Mr John Sunley, Chairman of the Club, were the speakers. Mr Sunley installed Mr Gay Kindersley as his successor at the

Actuaries Company unsuccessful attempt to seize pow-Mr C.W.F. Low, Master, Worshipful Company of Actuaries, accompanied er, 1969; the attempted invasion of

Ury 100150

by the Wardens, Mr M.H. Field and Mr C.R.C. Huwkes, presided at the Annoal Banquet held yesterday evening in the Mansion House, London EC4. The Lord Mayor of London, Mr John Chalstrey, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Chalstrey, the Sheriffs and their ladies, was the speaker. The Very Rev Dr H.R. Wyllic and Mr A.D. Gibson also snoke.

Royal Society of Medicine

Professor Ian Isherwood delivered the Jephcott Lecture, "The Imaging Quest - a search for reality" yester day evening at the Royal Society of Medicine, London WI. Sir Donald Harrison, President of the society, accompanied by Lady Harrison, received the guests at o supper held afterwards. Among those present

Mr and Mrs N.W. Jephcoit; Sir Richard and Lady Sykes; Sir Gordon and Lady Wolsten-hotne; Sir Gordon and Lady Robson; Sir Christopher Booth; Sir David and Lady Innes Williams; Sir George and Lady Pinker; Sir Christopher Paine.

Appointments

Judge John H. Roberts, to be a member of the Ethnic Minorities Advisory Committee of the Judicial Studies

Ms Carol Edwine Taylor, to be a full- | time chairman of Industrial Trihunals, assigned to the Londoo South Region.

Mrs Caroline Jane Lloyd, to be a fulltime Immigration Adjudicator, designed a special adjudicator. Mr James Aiden O'Brien Quinn, 10 be a full-time legal member of the Im-migration Appeal Tribunal.

Mr Iau Stuart Fairwood, to be a district judge, on the North Eastern Circuit

Schools

St John's School, Leatherhead mmer Term begins today at St John's School, Leatherhead, Mark Glew is Captain of the School and Richard Vosser is Captain of Cricket. The Junior School play, Loot, will be performed on 22, 23 and 24 May, and the ODS production of Abigail's Party will be on 4 and 5 July. Choral Evensoog is at 6.30pm on Tuesday i May, the Friends of St John's Recital is at 6.30pm oo Thursday 6 June and the Summer Concert will be performed on Sunday 30 June at 80m. Old Johnian Sunday is 30 June - the preacher will be the Rev Martin Francis - and Prizegiving is on Saturday 6 July, when the Guest of Honour will be Lord Cartisle of Bucklow. Mr S.W. Chubb retires at the end of term af-

ter 35 years as Head of Economics

and Politics.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS The Duke of Edinburgh opens the

Southampton Oceanography Centre. Empress Docks, Southampton; as Colonel-in-Chief, visits the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Tid-worth, Wiltshire. The Prince of Wales, Visitor, visits the Glasgow School of Art; as Royal Visitor, Scottish Conservation Projects Trust, visits Craigton Cemetery environmental project, Cardonald, Glasgow, and as Visitor, visits Strathclyde University, Glasgow, The Princess Royal, President, the Rural Housing frust, opens the new scheme developed frust, opens the new scheme developed by the English Rural Housing Associ-ation at Mary Cross Close, Wiggington, Heritordshire; as Patron, Dunn Nutrition Centre, attends a collaboration between the Medical Research Council and Schook on Dict. Exercise and Long-Term Health, at Hills Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge; and as President, British Olympic Association, attends the Cambridge Appeal Dinner at Trinity College, Cambridge, Princess Michael of Kent, President, SSAFA, attends a farewell dinner for the controller. Charles Grey, at Apsley House.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Reg-iment mounts the Queen's Life Guard al Horse Guards, tram; tst Battelion Welsh Guards monots the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots

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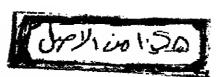
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BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2530 fax 0171 293 2098

National Power takeover fever grips market

Industrial Correspondent

Takeover fever gripped the elec-tricity sector last night amid speculation that National Power, the largest generator, is being targeted for a £7bn-plus bid. Ordinary shares in the company soared by 27p to 517p and the partly paid by 30p to 387p. boosting the company's market worth by £466m to £7.3bn.

City analysts speculated that US utilities, including Southern Company, could be potential predators. A hid for National Power would require the approval of the Government. which retains a golden share in the company. Agreement by ministers to a takeover, particularly by a foreign group, would almost certainty cause a political furore. It is just over a year since the Government sold its last stakes in National Power and PowerGen for £4bn.

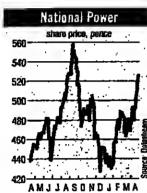
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A team from SBC Warburg, the merchant bank which last year advised Southern on its £1.1bn bid for Sweb, was last night locked in meetings and un-

able to comment. Some City analysts said that National Power, headed by John Baker, would be too hig a target for Southern on its own but there was also speculation over a potential joint takeover. Some analysts think Soutbern Electric would be willing to dispose of some of over and above that planned by the company itself.

Within the industry the speculative talk yesterday focused on the arrangement of a rumoured \$12bn (£8bn) loan facility by



hanks including Barclays de Zoete Wedd and SBC Warburg.

Other names mentioned amid the bid fever included Houston Industries, Pacific Gas and Electric and Mission Energy of the US. One analyst said potential European predators could include Spain's Endesa and Electricité de France. "We are seeing the sort of smoke that we rarely see in this industry without fire. The reason National Power's name has not been in the frame before is simply its size," he added.

The hid flames were fanned earlier in the day following reports that Southern Company of the US was close to selling a large stake in South Western Electricity with a view to making further investments.

Bill Dahlberg, Southern's chairman, said it had no intention of losing control at Sweh, which it bought for £1.1bn last year. But he said it would be "advantageous" to sell a mi-nority interest "to regain some of our financial investment and then reinvest that on other quality companies like Sweb".

A big target: John Baker, chairman of National Power (left), and Brian Birkenhead, finance director Mr Dahlberg did not comment on the generation business, although Southern is

thought to have been keen at one time to buy power plants being sold by National Power under pressure from the regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild. Mr Dahiberg added that he did not envisage buying another UK regional electricity firm "at this point".

National Power declined to comment on the rumours. A

pany refused to respond to speculation that it might bid for a British company following disposal of the Sweb stake. There was talk in the City earlier that Soutbern may seek to acquire South West Water, which faces potential rival hids by Severn Trent Water and

Wessex Water. Mr Dahlberg had said he saw an opportunity coming in pretty quickly to bring in water business in a country outside the US".

tional Power's takeover of The rumours emerged at a Southern and that of Midlands sensitive time for National Pow-Electricity by PowerGen. er, which is awaiting the Gov-Separately, Utilicorp of the US said it would buy out the reernment's response to a Monopolies and Mergers

maining 25 per cent of its UK Commission report on its prosubsidiary, which has gas mar-keting joint ventures with sevposed takeover of Southern Electric of the UK. Ministers eral regional electricity firms. The stake, thought to be worth were outraged at the end of last week following the leak of the about £15m, was owned by a MMC report on the National company called Norland Gas Power takeover, The Economist whose directors included Sir Ian magazine reported that the MMC had recommended that the Government approve Na-

Comment, page 21

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER Woolwich details Robinson claims

NIC CICUTTI

Lawyers for Peter Robinson, the Woolwich chief executive whose recent shock resignation following claims of financial irregularities rocked the society, have received the first documents detailing the allegations against him.

DJ Freeman, solicitors to Mr Robinson, said yesterday the first batch of papers had been handed over by Linklaters & Paines, who act for Woolwich. Mr Robinson was believed to

have met barristers yesterday to prepare his defence against claims that he misused society resources. However, he has resisted calls to appear at the so-ciety's annual meeting in London tomorrow, arguing that such a move would be counterproductive for himself and ₩oolwich.

It is understood that the documents handed on behalf of Woolwich to DJ Freeman are only the first in a series relating to his case.

More papers are likely to be submitted by Linklaters & Paines in the next few weeks, mcluding a separate report by the accountancy firm KPMG, hrought in as external auditors by Woolwich to examine the matter in more detail.

Sources within Woolwich have alleged that Mr Robinson used society gardeners to carry out work on the grounds of his property, in the village of Brasted, Kent, as well as internal decorating work on his £450,000 home. It is also claimed that he wrongly obtained the use of a Range Rover for his family.

Mr Rohinson, who was forced to resign suddenly two weeks ago after just three months in his new job, denies the allegations, which he argues are part of a vendetta from disgruntled employees who are aiming to smear him.

He is insisting on compensation for the sudden end of his two-year revolving contract, worth about £300,000 a year.

ptimism over economy spurs shares to a record

CDIANE COYLE

- Economics Editor

11 Shares in London celebrated encouraging figures on the conomy climbing for the third day running to set another record. The FT-SE 100 index ended the day 34.8 points higher at 3,825.3, helped by a strong start on Wall Street.

Relailers were among the best performers in London, boosted by Monday's upbeat report on sales last month from unemployment, earnings and re-the British Retail Consortium tail prices, to be helpful. Howport on sales last month from

and good results from the supermarket chain Tesco.

Property shares benefited from hrighter news from estate agents, who said March saw the strongest housing market activity for two years, Many analysts who had not

expected the FT-SE 100 to pass the 3,800 mark before midyear have hegun to set their sights on the target of 4,000. Economists expect most of the figures due this week, including

ever, the full-year figures for government borrowing could be disappointing for the gilts mar-ket. It will also scrutinise the minutes released today of the meeting on 7 March between Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George for hints about the Bank of England's attitude to

> Investors are reacting to hopes that the economy is improving enough to help the Conservatives start climbing out of the electoral doldrums.

further reductions in the cost of

"There is a feeling that the market was discounting political risks. The FT-SE 100 bears the brunt of the changes in political sentiment," Philip Isherwood, equity strategist at Kleinwort Benson, said. Robert Barrie at BZW said

it was increasingly clear there was a pick-up in the economy that would help corporate profits. "The pause in growth has been rough for some firms, so there could be quite a bounce hack in corporate earnings." There were fresh signs yes-

terday of huoyancy in the economy. Optimism among small businesses leapt in the three months to Fehruary, according to a quarterly survey of 1,700 small businesses by the office supplier Office World.

The survey's poll of the voting intentions of the small husiness owners also signalled the first increase in the Conservatives' share since November 1994. It climbed 4 points to 31.7 per cent, with Labour's standing unchanged at 26.5 per cent. Separately, new construction orders jumped 9 per cent in the three months to Fehruary compared with the previous three, according to the Department of the Environment. They were 11 per cent higher than the same period a year earlier despite lling in January and Fehruary.

Wall Street's strength underpinned the rise in London share prices. The Dow Jones index was more than 14 points higher at 5.607.37 by mid-morning, helped hy some strong

first-quarter corporate results. Ior the st They included the car giant per cent.

quarter earnings of \$1.01hn and record revenues of \$15bn, well above analysts' expectations. Other contributors to the Dow's advance were rises in Eastman Kodak and IBM. There was additional evidence that the US economy was

Chrysler, which reported first-

steadily recovering from its earlier slowdown. A 0.5 per cent drop in industrial output in March resulted from the strike at General Motors. Adjusting for the strike, output grew 0.3

Gas names new Red-faced RJR service chief

MARY FAGAN Industrial Correspondent

The changes sweeping through British Gas continued vesterday with the appointment of a new chief for its service business a division that was beavily criticised for its performance during the winter freeze.

Roger Wood, who until now nas been managing director of Matra Marconi, replaces David Wells, who is to retire early from the company after 27 years. British Gas said that there was no payoff for Mr Wells, who is 55 and who will work alongside Mr Wood until the early autumn

Earlier this year British Gas came under fire for leaving customers waiting for days to bave repairs carried out, even where they had paid around £100 for "three-star" service contracts. Customers who believed they were in entitled to priority treatment were left without heating during the freeze, prompting an attack from the Gas Consumers Council, which said it had warned well in advance that the problem

might occur. The appointment of a new managing director from outside the gas industry will be seen as a further attempt by British Gas to repair its damaged image. British Gas said Mr Wood had "wide experience in competitive customer-focused businesses" including ICL, the UK computer company owned by Fu-jitsu of Japan, and STC, the

telecommunications group. During his time at STC he worked with Roy Gardner, British Gas director responsible for business trading operations, who is viewed increasingly as a key figure in the management

Mr Gardner said: "David Wells has done an excellent job in establishing British Gas Service as a separate business within British Gas. We now look to Roger Wood to build on that achievement and carry the busi-ness forward."

British Gas has suffered a series of problems and public relations fiascos since the end of 1994. Its fall from grace in the eyes of customers has shocked both the company and City analysts. British Gas bas blamed the drop in standards of service on its radical restructuring to meet the changing shape of the UK gas market.

The group now faces the prospect of domestic competition starting with a pilot area in the South-west on 29 April. Clare Spottiswoode, the industry watchdog, has warned that Britisb Gas will have to act to reassure customers to prevent them leaving the company in large numbers as competitors come on stream. So far only about 30,000 peo-

ple from an area covering 500,000 households have opted to leave British Gas.

raider retreats

DANIELLE ROBINSON

Bennett LeBow, the US investor and corporate raider, yesterday staged an cmbarrassing 11th-hour climb-down in his six-month battle to split RJR Nabisco Holdings Corporation into separate food and tobacco husinesses

He was set to team up with fellow corporate raider Carl Icahn to launch a hitter proxy fight at today's RJR annual meeting. Mr LeBow said he called off his fight after failing to win enough votes to elect his board nominees.

His plan was to oust current RJR board members, replace them with people sympathetic to his and Mr Icahn's views and then spin off Nabisco, the food That would bave left RJR

with the tobacco company RJ Reynolds, which he then wanted to merge with eigarette manufacturer Liggett Group, a subsidiary of his company Brooke Group, of which be is chairman.

But as RJR Nabisco braced itself for one of its most volatile sharebolder meetings, Mr LeBow said yesterday. "Although this is disappointing, it comes as no surprise. We always knew we were facing an uphili battle.

The news is a hig coup for RJR, which broke records in

leveraged huyout when KKR took it over for \$25bn.

Mr Icahn and Mr LeBow together control about 19 million shares, equal to about 7 per cent of RJR, making them the second-largest shareholders.

Both men are notorious for buying up strategic stakes in companies in a bid to force management to execute actions that benefit their own husiness objectives.

This time, however, neither seem to bave any specific plans regarding RJR, apart from con-tinuing to loudly voice their opinions. Mr LeBow attempted to redeem himself yesterday by arguing that his six-month fight with RJR forced the company to restore some shareholder rights and announce an increased dividend and a modest share repurchase pro-gramme. "It's no doubt that without the pressure we applied .. managers would not have

gone that far," be said. He said be would continue to demand that RJR spin off Nabisco now. "We still believe in a Nabisco spin-off and we are still convinced that it can and should be done," he said.

Last January RJR floated a 19.5 per cent stake in Nabisco. The move was structured to allow RJR to spin off the remaining Nabisco shares at a future date on a tax-free basis.

However, the RJR board will RIR, which broke records in not consider a complete spin-1989 as the world's largest off until 1997 or 1998.

UNIT TRUST PRICES

Starting today (on page 19) a fuller list of unit trust prices will appear on Wednesdays as well as on Saturdays.



NOW IN THE NORTH **SEE PAGE 26** TODAY'S LEGAL **APPOINTMENTS** SECTION

Tesco stays top grocer with profit of £681m

Tesco strengthened its position as Britain's leading grocery retailer yesterday when it reported a 14.5 per cent surge in profits to £681m, along with a bullish message on current trading and an increase in spending on new stores and refurbish-

Tesco claims that it has increased its share of the UK grocery market from 12 per cent last year to 13.6 per cent. maintaining its lead over Sainsbury's. Sainsbury's has yet to release its figures hut had a share of 11.5 per cent last year. David McCartby, food retail

analyst at the stockbroker BZW, said the figures proved that the price battle between the supermarkets was really just a "phoney war". "We've had price wars on turkeys, bananas, petrol and now haked beans. But Tesco's margins bave only fallen by a fraction. If prices are falling on some products they are being increased elsewhere to make up for it. There ain't по price war out there."

Tesco, chaired by Sir Ian MacLaurin, reported that, excluding new store openings, its sales had increased by almost 9 per cent last year. In the five weeks to Easter sales continued

FTSE 350

<u>FT All Share</u>

However, the petrol price war is causing some damage and will cost Tesco up to £30m this year as the company moves to match the Esso PriceWatch campaign. David Malpas, Tesco's managing director, said: "Our feeling is that the present

price position will continue for another 18 months or so and it will be uncomfortable. But we intend to be one of the people left standing at the end of it and hope to emerge in a stronger position. We won't be beaten on price." Elsewhere, the BSE scare on beef bas cost Tesco up to £10m so far on discounted stock and the cost of increasing supplies of other meats. The baked beans battle, with

the price of a can falling to 3p, is proving a significant loss-maker as Tesco buys its beans at 14p a can. It is continuing to ration shoppers to four tins per customer to maintain stocks. "It's a very silly situation and we hope it won't continue for too

hers since its launch last year, Tesco unveiled an aggressive store opening programme.

STOCK MARKETS

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long." Mr Malpas said.
As well as reporting that its
Clubcard loyalty scheme had
now signed up 8.5 million mem-It will open 24 new stores this year including 10 superstores, up to six city-centre Tesco Metros and six branches of Tesco

a petrol station has a conve-nience store attached. Mr Malpas said the Metro stores were profitable in spite of the higher rents in prime locations. He added that the Express format appeared popular with cus-tomers although its perfor-mance had been clouded by the petrol price war. Seven stores will be opened in Europe. Cap-

of £681 m, excluding a £6m loss



on disposal of fixed assets, were struck on a 20 per cent increase in group sales to £13bn in the year to 24 Fehruary. The dividend rose by 11.6 per cent to 9.6p. The shares fell 3p to 287p. Investment column, page 22

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Power by courtesy of good ol' Atlanta, Georgia

Those good of boys from Atlanta, Georgia, the people who took over South Western Electricity last year, are an amhitious lot Rut have the people who took over South Western Electricity last year, are an amhitious lot Rut have the people who took over South to upset the apple cart.

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Ideologically, they may not care very length of their pension to hold some the people who took over South to upset the apple cart.

Ideologically, they may not care very length of their pension to hold some the pen tions lot. But have they the stomach - or the money - to mount a takeover bid for Britain's largest power generator, National Power? That was the buzz in the stock market last night - a £7.5hn hid for National Power from Southern Company of the US. Sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? Surely the Government would never wear it? With no approach yet made to National Power, which is working on plans to renew its bid for the rather smaller Southern Electric of the UK, nor on the face of it would the

But just listen to this. Where there's a will there's a way. Properly presented, as a genuine merger to create a new world-class trans-Atlantic company in power generation and distribution, it might just about be possible to sell this deal to a sceptical Parliament. Everyone else is merging, growing bigger and going global. Why confine power generation to its narrow domestic market?

Capitalised at more than \$15bn, Southern Company of the US could certainly afford to bid, highly geared though utilities tend to be in the US. But plainly it needs to tread carefully. If it were to charge in with a bostile takeover, it probably wouldn't stand a chance. This is a government desperate to hang on to power for as long as it takes for hang on to power for as long as it takes for that clusive feel-good factor to show through in the polls. Ministers are bardly going to

much if more than a quarter of Britain's generating capacity ends up in American hands. This government's view of these things has long been the purist one that provided the utilities are properly run and regulated, it doesn't really matter where they are owned and by whom. However, with the Government's parliamentary majority virtually nonexistent, ideology is not the guiding factor.

Labour MPs would not be the only ones throwing up their hands in horror. There would be plenty of Little Englander Tories joining them. Quite bow the Government would choose to exercise its golden share in these circumstances is anyone's guess. To make this deal work at all, therefore, Southern has to sell it as a genuine partnership. with a real and very senior role for British management in the merged company. Could it be made to work? Much stranger and more difficult transactions than this one have. So why not? The balls are rolling. All depends on whether National Power's John Baker is prepared to play.

PFI critique is a familiar one

of a financial nightmare in the making almost too good for a hruiser like Sir Alastair to miss. If he did bring his crisis management skills to bear again he would find himself on familiar territory - trapped between duplicitous ministers on the one

band and whingeing building contractors on the other, with MPs sniping from the rocks. The latest critique of the PFI from the Commons Treasury Committee journeys along a familiar road. Despite one curious and out-of-context reference to the PFI as "very imaginative and laudable", the MPs make it pretty plain that it will be time for the concrete overshoes sooner rather than later unless things start to go right.

There are two schools of thought about

the PFI, both of which get a good airing in the committee's report. One is that the PFI will fail miserably to live up to expectations, leaving an embarrassing and large hole in capital spending plans for this government or, more probably, its successor to pick up. The other is that the PFI succeeds beyond

everyone's wildest dreams and results in a deferred public spending binge of such huge and yet unquantifiable proportions that it would hring a hlush to the face around at the Building Employers Confederation.

The beauty of the PFI is that it brings private sector efficiency to public sector pro-curement in a way that almost certainly sion funds to appoint speakers on the Ooor

because instead of paying to get things built, the state pays for them to be run.

This in turn skews investment decisions because projects are selected more on the basis of profitability than need. There is no reason wby the profit motive and planned long-term investment in the infrastructure

cannot co-exist and produce the right result.
The problem, as the MPs point out, is that no ooe will know until either the Isle of Wight has been turned into a penal colony because nobody is huilding prisons or conversely half the country is incarcerated in shiny new cells courtesy of Michael Howard and over-zealous private contractors. With a choice between the PFI fizzling out after all the hype or storing up a public deficit problem of mind-boggling proportions for the next generation, it is easy to see which way things will go. It will not be the first time a government has mortgaged the future.

A simple idea watered down

By far the most interesting idea in yes-terday's consultative document from the DTI on shareholders' rights came from the National Association of Pension Funds,

IN BRIEF

per cent to \$469m.

fund clients - to appoint more than one representative to speak from the floor, because of difficulties with the Companies Act. Yet that nominee company may be responsible for shares owned by many different sets of pension fund trustees.

A change in the law to make it easier for the nominee company to appoint multiple representatives to speak at the AGM on behalf of the beneficial owners of the shares would give individual pension funds and their trustees much greater access to the floor of the meetings. Instead of a big fund management group making an anodyne contribution - if it says anything at all - the trustees of client funds would be able to send their own people in to speak. Initiatives like this, giving the real owners of institutional money a greater say, are a move in the right direction for shareholder democracy.

As for the rest of the document, unfor-

tunately it shows how easily the best Whitehall minds can water down a simple idea. The Employment Select Committee wanted companies to be made to pay for share-bolder resolutions at annual meetings. The DTI bas come up with a yes, hut ... It thinks resolutions should be included with annual report mailings to save costs of up to £100,000 for a hig shareholder register. Not much good if your resolution has been

 Citicorp, the second-largest hank in the US, announced a disappointing 10 per cent increase in profits in the first quarter of this year, to \$914m (£600m) from \$829m over the same period

in 1995. George Salem, analyst at Gerard Klauer Mattison & Co, said: "These earnings don't look terrific. The bottom line is OK, it's bow they got there that isn't." Securities trading revenue fell 14 per cent to \$295m, after a heavy drop in foreign exchange revenues. Losses from the bank's US credit card business rose 40

per cent to \$467m. However, consumer banking profits rose 11

per cent to \$513m, while corporate banking earnings were up 18

Adair Turner, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, said restoring the "feel-good factor" depended on equip-

ping people to cope with job insecurity. Better education and train-

ing was needed to give them employability for life even if they could not he sure of a job for life.

Tie Rack, the tie and scarves retailer, plans to open 50 new stores

this year, mostly in Europe as it seeks to reduce its dependence

on the mature UK market. Only four or five of the new stores

will be in the UK. The 379-strong chain announced a 7 per cent

increase in profits to £7.9m on sales up 15 per cent at £96.6m.

Asda is lodging a complaint with the European Commission

in its hid to have price maintenance on non-prescription medi-

cines declared illegal. The company claims the price-fixing infringes

Investment Column 22

The American division made its first profit since 1987.

Conservative MPs attack public finance initiative

MICHAEL HARRISON

A Conservative-dominated committee of MPs yesterday launched a scathing attack on the Government's Private Finance Initiative and called on the Chancellor to re-think the cornerstone of the scheme that no capital spending projects be approved unless they have heen considered for PFI

funding. The Commons Treasury Committee also voiced concern that the PFI may not meet its target of funding £14bn worth of public projects by 1999 - jeopardising scores of health, transport and education programmes.

Despite fresh measures announced two weeks by Michael Jack, the Financial Secretary, to that it would hring in addition- should now consider scrapping makes private profits."

levelled a series of criticisms at the initiative.

They expressed particular concern that the PFI could end up distorting investment decisions and making long-term planning of the infrastructure more difficult because the private sector would select projects on the basis of profitability, not

The MPs also warned that the PFI could result in public spending running out of control because of the way private contractors fund the capital cost of projects and then receive payments from the Government for running and maintenance.

The PFI was launched in 1992 with a pledge by the then-Chancellor, Norman Lamont,

said it had become obvious that the PFI was being used to replace public spending. According to the Government's latest forecasts, public sector capital spending will fall by £2.5bn between this year and 1998/9 while PFI spending is projected to rise to £2.6bn by

The MPs said, however, that the Government's projections of PFI spending were "optimistic" and added: "If there is a serious shortfall in the PFI projections, it will be difficult to provide money from public

capital budgets to fill the gap." One of the MPs' key recommendations is that the Treasury

strengthen the PFI, the MPs al private funds to supplement the rule which requires govpublic capital spending.

But in their report the MPs

ernment departments to explore PFI funding before giving the go-ahead to any capital

> Critics have claimed that this leads to the initiative being clogged up considering projects that are clearly unsuitable for private funding while important programmes, particularly hospital projects, are held

> Clive Betts, a Labour member of the committee, said: "One of our biggest worries is that the only schemes which may go ahead are ones that the private sector will fund. That means decisions about public spending priorities are being taken, not in the political arena, but on the hasis of what



Michael Jack: Measures to strengthen PFI

Norwich Union, one of the UK's largest mutual insurers, confirmed yesterday that its is to introduce a rule change to its annual meeting in May allowing it to set a cut-off date for new policyholders if it decides to seek a stock market flotation. However, NU's group chief executive, Allan Bridgewater, said the rule change should not be interpreted as implying that de-mutualisation would definitely go ahead.

• Chelsea Building Society has closed to new members all accounts which could be opened with less than £2,500 after several branches ran out of passbooks because of the rush to open new accounts. The minimum for membership was previously £1,000. Leeds & Holbeck has doubled the amount needed to open a membership account to £1,000, but hopes to reduce it again once conversion mania subsides.

• The board of Union Bank of Switzerland yesterday saw off an attempt by the dissident shareholder, Martin Ebner, to block the nomination of the new chairman. Former chief executive Robert Studer was elected at the AGM by an absolute majority, defeating Mr Ebner's campaign to force a change in management.

DTI proposes increased rights for shareholders

PETER RODGERS Business Editor

The Government yesterday proposed giving sharebolders rights to put resolutions to annual meetings at the company's expense, but made it clear that the rights would be curbed to prevent disruption to business at annual meetings.

from the Department of Trade

and Industry also outlined pro-posals to make it easier for pen-suggested by the NAPF would sion funds to appoint representatives to speak at annual meetings. In the present state of the law there are a series of technical difficulties. which were pointed out to the DTI by the National Association of Pension Funds, which asked for an amendment of sec-A consultative document tion 375 of the Companies Act.

The DTI said that one effect

be to benefit the increasing numbers of individual shareholders who use the services of nominee companies, a result of the spread of electronic settlement. These shareholders would also find it easier to appoint representatives to speak at annual meetings.
The DTI consultative docu-

that a change in the law would allow corporate shareholders of all kinds to appoint multiple representatives at meetings in order to carry votes on a show of hands. But the document sug-gested that this would he outweighed by the advantages.

The DTI was responding to a recommendation by the Commons Select Committee on Employment, which said: "We

Act is amended to require How could the timetable for cirshareholders' resolutions, where they are supported by a sufficient number of shareholders and are limited in length, to be circulated by the company to all sharebolders without cost." But the DTI made clear that the full imple-

mentation of this proposal would be expensive and difficult to carry out in practice.

minimum, and what safeguards should there be against the disruntion of business at agms? One of the principal concerns was to avoid forcing companies to spend up to £100,000 print-

culating papers for agms be

made known to shareholders,

how could the costs of circu-

lating resolutions be kept to a

ing and posting shareholders' resolutions ahead of the agm.

IIS WEEK IN AMEINDERENDENT

This week and every week, Section Two has a new look, with more. pages new features. a daily radio column and an expanded istings section providing Britain's most comprehensiver daily guide to go out.

A STATE OF THE STA The second of the second

on Monday

A new regular section, Family Life, that deals with the interests and problems of parents and children. Julie Merson's column alse focuses on home life Pips a new series — Do we need? — Which challenges—the goods of modern Britain.

And every Monday unityalled coverage of the expanding World of information technology in our Newsons pull-dist section.

or Inesday

lealth, how wearing a virtual reality helmet could help eare phobias and other psychological problems. Plus flaky nais are not simply a problem for the vain

but a sign of ill-health, so what can be done about them? Also on Tuesday, fashion, architecture, visual

A 24-page tabloid section with all the action from the weekend's sporting action. Plus: the Monday interview

in which a leading figure comes under the microscope,

an unbeatable results service, gossip, speculation and fact from behind the scenes and the best in sports

Ci Jones's clary communes to shronicle the and law. In our back contents and exclusive embarrassments in the life leading rock poet, a country's furniest country furniest co

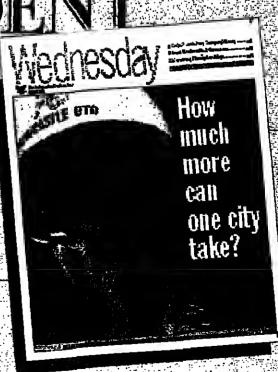
and law. In our back pages, Martin Newell, Britain's leading rock poet, and Neil Kerber, one of the country's funniest cartoonists, present their views of

All our regular features, including Virginia Ironside's Dilemmas, John Walsh's column, plus film, education

and graduate plus. In the back pages, William Hartston's history of the world in 101/2 inches-

24Seven - a new 20-page pull-out and keep intertainment and listings section. Including a complete day-by-day planner for the week ahead, plus

seven-day TV, radio and satellite listings; ticket offers and informed comment on the week's highlights. Plus: eight pages of pop and classical music



Tesco explodes price war myth

Tesco has been on a roll in the supermarket battle for such a long time now that all its rivals, apart from the evergreen Asda, have looked pretty pedes Irian by comparison. Yesterday's figures continued the story with figures some of its rivals - particularly Sainsbury – would kill for.

It is hard to argue with a 14.5 per cent increase in profits to £681 m and like-for-like sale increases of almost 9 per cent for the year to 24 February. Even with a petrol price war, a BSE scare in beef and a silly season on baked beans, like-for-like sales are up 7 per

cent in the five weeks to Easter. Though the petrol hattle will cost Tesco £30m this year and may yet prove a larger problem if it drags on. Tesco has still beld its operating margin at 6.2 per cent. This indicates that in spite of all the well-publicised "price wars", on everything from bananas to turkeys, prices are simply being increased elsewhere to offset the damage.

In addition to a variety of customer service schemes Tesco is scoring points by continuing to invest in back-office technology which releases staff who can then be deployed where it really counts - out on the shop floor.

The Tesco hulls say that the company's innovative management will continue to dream up fresh wheezes whenever the going gets tough and therefore keep itself one step ahead. The UK business looks particularly strong, with operating profits up by 18 per cent. The drag on profits is the expansion in to central Europe, where seven new stores will open in the current year. In the UK, sales densities in new store openings are at record levels, which appears to disprove the market saturation theory - and a further 24 new stores will open this year.

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But amid all the hullabaloo there are concerns, which were reflected in a share price down another 3p yesterday

Some analysts are concerned about Tesco's future earnings growth prospects and a change in the dividend policy announced yesterday which links the payment to earnings rather than rising progressively, as before. The City is also nervous about the possibility of an acquisition, though management says its focus is on organic

What is clear is that this is going to prove another interesting year for the supermarkets. While Tesco and Asda remain the darlings of the sector, all eyes are on Sainsbury to see if it can recapture past glories.

While NatWest Securities is forecasting £721m for the current year. BZW has upgraded to £735m and foresees further upgrades if the petrol spat

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

abates. This puts the sbares on a forward rating of 13. Though Tesco is an impressive management story, the shares are unlikely to perform any spec-tacular tricks in the short term. Hold.

Boosey tunes up for growth

Despite being one of the best-known names in music publishing, Boosey & Hawkes had been largely neglected by City institutions until quite recently. That has changed as the group's un-blemished profit record has become established. Profits have grown steadily since Richard Holland climbed aboard as chief executive seven years ago, ris-ing from £2.46m in 1989 to £6.17m in 1995 after last year's 21 per cent in-crease reported yesterday. Since the beginning of 1995, the sbares bave outperformed the rest of the stock market by 68 per cent, after a further 43p

rise yesterday to a new peak of 698p.

The price was spurred last year when the European Union harmonised come from the rapidly growing Far copyright periods to 70 years. That de-

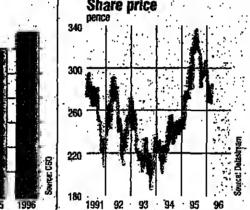
cision, ratified by Parliament in December, extended copyrights in the UK and some other European countries by 20 years and gave a new lease of life to copyrights controlled by Boosey. Long-dead composers such as Rachmaninoff, Delius and Elgar will come

back under the company's wing. Boosey can take more than £1,000 a night from a well attended opera at Covent Garden at which one of its pieces is used, quite apart from recording rights and sheet music sales. The group managed to squeeze juicy margins of 21 per cent out of the publishing business last year. This year should benefit from further margin expansion, although earnings will be held back by reorganisation at Bote & Bock, the German music publisher acquired ear-

lier this year.
Most of the growth last year came from Boosey's instruments business, which saw underlying profits jump 14 per cent to £4.18m. Concentration on margins and additional funds from the Lottery directed at brass bands in the UK boosted the business, but in the long term the excitement is likely to

	OB 207 P	zon, snare	arker value. Zo.	
1996	1994 199	1993	1992	i-year record
0.1 13.0	8.6 10	7.6	7.1	umover (Ebn)
51 675	435 55	558	545	re-tax profits (£m)
8.9 22.2	15.2 18	18.6	18.1	arnings per share (pence)
1.6 9.6.	7.75 .8.	7.1	6.3	ividends per share (pence)
	are price	ł p		Market share
٠.	7.75 8.	7.1		ividends per share (pence)

lesco: at a glance



share in the US. Victory in Boosey's long-running \$200m claim against Walt Disney would transform the group, but the case remains bogged down in the US legal system for now. Profits of more than £7m this year would put the sbares on a heady forward multiple of over 30 and with US publisher Carl Fischer in effect sitting on over 50 per cent, they are hard to get bold of. A firm hold none the less.

Tie Rack keeps it tight

There is nothing Roy Bishko hates more than people describing his beloved Tie Rack as a niche retailer. He hates the term with a vengeance, since it lumps his company with all those former stars of the 1980s such as Sock Shop, many of which have fallen on hard times. His view is that Tie Rack is a cautiously run, well-managed retailer that happens to focus on neckware (ties and scarves to you and me).

It is plainly an overreaction, but you can see his point. While other 1980s "niche retailers" bave fallen by the way-side. Tie Rack has been motoring strongly. Its shares, for example, have risen from 22p in 1991 to 165p, even after yesterday's 5p fall, and bave en-joyed a meteoric rise in the past 12

Yesterday saw another solid if unspectacular set of results. Profits of £7.9m were a 7 per cent improvement on last time but hid a range of differ-ent performances. In the UK, where Tie Rack has 169 of its 379 stores, profits fell as a result of the hot summer and tough trading conditions. Like-for-like sales were flat. But the US business, which now has 63 stores, made its first profits since 1987.

As the UK market reaches maturity, Tie Rack sees most of its profit growth coming from overseas, particularly in Europe. It operates in 26 countries and will open 50 new stores this year, the same as in 1995.

The Rolling Luggage Company, a new format that started trials last year, will be expanded gradually from its current three outlets. The expansion is backed by net cash of almost £14m.

Although steady growth can be expected, analysts were reining back forecasts yesterday. Central costs are set to rise for the

second year running as the company adapts its systems to cope with a Nat West expects profits of £8.7m this

year, which puts the shares on a for-ward rating of 16. Worth bolding.

Where there's smoke, there's cattle-burning

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK



Nn elephants, please, we're British: Xennphobic Brits may think that Johnny Foreigner has lots of funny habits, but they should hear what the Chinese think about the Brits. The Jatest Overseas Jobs Express quotes the China Trade News on how to behave when travelling to the UK to do business. "When dealing with the British there are certain taboos and superstitions it is necessary to understand.

"Elephants are taboo to the British - if you are exporting goods you must ensure that they do unt carry any pictures of elephants on trademarks nr packaging. Hnrseshoes however are considered lucky."

The correspondent goes nn: "When eating with the English, ynn must make every effort to avoid making any noise by knocking china and cutlery together. Also, meetings of 13 per ple are not of the question, as it is an unlucky number." The article concludes by advising visitors to remember that Britain is a country of animal-lovers and to make a point of saying a few words of appreciation to pet owners about their animals. Like "nice goldfish."

course. Interest in political activities was a mere 5 per cent. John Major really has

The Italians love nattering on their mobile phones so much that the Italian government was forced recently to place screening material on the outside of its Parliament building, to block such phone conversations and ensure at

least some work got done. This story is told with a mix of amusement and pride by Francesco Caio, the 38-yearold chief executive of Omnitel Pronto Italia, the smaller of Italy's two mobile compa-

nies. In the months since Omnitel launched last December, it has gained 100,000 subscribers. By comparison, Orange managed in the first three months of its UK launch to attract a quarter of that number.

Ominitel's progress is of es-pecial interest to Olivetti, Carlo De Benedetti's troubled computer giant, since the latter owns 41 per cent of the new company. Olivetti yesterday announced net loss-es for 1995 of a mere 1.598 trillion (yes, trillion) lire, or £670m. No wonder Signor Caio is interested in floating off Omnitel.

IN BRIEF

 Peptide Therapeutics, the fledgling biotechnology group, announced pre-tax losses increased from £2.72m to £3.61m for the year to December. The group, which raised £24m in a stock market flotation in November, had net cash of £27m at the end of December after a cash outflow that was said to be on target at £4.4m for the year. Peptide said its marketing collaboration with Mochida Pharmaccutical was developing well and licensing and technology agreements were under discussion.

 Antomotive Precision Holdings said the expected reduction in its North American and European automotive markets had materialised, but this had been more than compensated for by orders for additional component ranges, mostly from existing customers. Its areas of expertise, such as power steering, vehicle air conditioning and fuel injection systems, continued to outperform the market, the group said. With growth set to continue, Automotive is planning to add to its manufacturing space at Tonbridge in Kent and expects to strengthen its management team this year. Pre-tax profits rose 10 per cent to £6.1m in the year to December and a final dividend of 3.3p raises the annual total by two-

 S Jerome said unseasonally warm weather last October and November had slowed the expected order intake, and that turnover in the apparel business for the first quarter had been flat as a result. However, it is now apparent that orders were merely post-poned and the forward order book at the end of the March is "encouraging". Meanwhile, the upholstery business is showing steady growth, the group said. Pre-tax profits were up 31 per cent to £951,000 in the year to December, with earnings per share rising a fifth to 7.7p. The final dividend is 1.5p, making 2.25p for the year, up from 1.5p in 1994.

COMPANY RESULTS					
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend	
Adamative Precision (F)	24.05m (20.4m)	6.1m (5.55m)	10.1p (9.1p)	5p (3p)	
Boosey & Hawkes (F)	87.1m (82.7m)	6 17m (5 09m)	20.3p (17p)	7ρ (5. 9 p)	
Cobban (F)	227 7m (211.4m)	29.8m (22.8m)	26.23p (19.26p)	9.65p (8.32p)	
Gradus Group (F)	26.39m (22.6m)	3.63m (3.13m)	13.48p (12.05p)	4.8p	
S Jerume & Sees (F)	28.54m (26.85m)	0 85m (0.73m)	7.7p (9.2p)	2.25p (1.5p)	
Poptide Therapautics (F)	0.16m (0.05m)	-3 6m (-2.7m)	-20.2p (-20.8p)		
Saftire (F)	212.7m (178m)	-2.3m (2.8m)	-1.4p (3.6p)	0,1p	
Tesco (F)	13bn (10.9bn)	875m (551m)	22.2p (18.9p)	9.8p (8.8p)	
Tie Rack (F)	96.6m (83.9m)	7.92m (7.41m)	9.87p (9.34p)	2.75p (2.25p)	
(F) - Roal (I) - Interes.	(II) - Nice montes				

Reuters sits on cash mountain | Redland set to expand

MARY FAGAN Industrial Correspondent

Reuters yesterday disapppointed the City by failing to deliver confirmation about the long-awaited return of surplus cash to shareholders. Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, asked for "patience" while the board examined "all options" on the distribution of funds.

Speaking at the annual meeting, Sir Christopher said: "Be patient, il will come in one form or another." A spokesman for Reuters added that the company, which has more than £850m cash, still hoped to resolve the issue by year-end.

Expectations of an announcement had been running

14 per cent increase in revenues day. Michael Stranks, an anato £713m, helped by the ad- lyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, vantageous dollar exchange rate. At constant exchange rates the increase fell short of expectations at only 9 per cent.

Peter Job, chief executive. said growth from information products was slowing, partly due to consolidation in the financial sector, but also "partbecause we need our new 3000 product line [a replacement for the 2000 range of news and information screen-based products] to galvanise sales".

"This product line is now being tested with customers and is scheduled to be released prior to our half-year results announcement in July," he said. Reuters shares fell 15p to high ahead of the group's first-quarter results which showed a close at 749p, a fall of 2p on the

said: "Revenues were one point or so below expectations; the market had been looking for 10 per cent at constant exchange rates. The fact that there was nothing new at the moment on any special dividend or share buy-back also disappointed some of the bulls."

Jason Crisp, of Societe Générale Strauss Turnbull, said the share price fall was "an overreaction". The company bad strongly indicated at the time of its results announcement in February that it would not see double-digit sales growth at constant exchange rates, and that there would be nothing new until the end of the year on plans to redistribute surplus cash to shareholders. He added,



quarter of the UK market.

spin doctors Financial Dy-

namics after two-and-a-balf years, to join rivals Gavin An-derson. The former editor of

the Daily Telegraph Questor

Burmah Castrol while at FD.

Jeff Randall, former City edi-

tor of the Sunday Times who

joined FD last year, has also

recently left, to return to the

paper. Headhunters have ap-

parently been interested in

The traditional image of

small business owners is that

of "movers and shakers in

their local communities, ac-

tive in local politics, commu-

Office World's latest quarter-

brands this a myth. When you

nity and social activities.7

ly Small Business Survey

might have expected the

butcher, baker and plumber

to be down the Rotary Club

or running the local Conserv-

prefer to go to the cinema or

theatre. The survey finds that

sports activities were also im-

portant with over a third of

business owners. So at least

they are still down the golf

ative office, most in reality

the firm's talent.

column helped to advise

Smith & Nephew and

Marc Popiolek is leaving City

Slowdown: Peter Job hopes new products will lift sales

however, that there was likely to be disappointment in underlying sales growth.

Hanson sells Eveready South Africa

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Hanson has sold its Eveready South Africa battery operation to Duracell International, the world's biggest maker of alkaline batteries, for 525m rand (£82m). The sale announced yesterday comes on top of \$2.9bn (£1.9bn) of disposals already completed by the in-dustrial conglomerate in advance of the four-way demerger planned for later this year. It completes the tidying-up of

the Ever Ready batteries business, the UK end of which was sold to Raiston Purina of the US

in 1992. At the time, Ralston was restricted in what it could invest in South Africa by US sanctions. Hanson would not comment on whether the US group was involved in the bidding for Eveready South Africa, but it is known that an auction

took place. Hanson acquired Ever Ready for £95m in 1981, netted £40m from immediate disposal of loss-makers, and retains the Crabtree electrical plugs and sockets business.

Derek Bonham, chief executive, said: "This sale marks further progress in our disposals in

advance of our demerger programme, which is on track for later this year." Vice-chairman Christopher Collins said the plan was for the chemicals and tobacco operations to be demerged by 30 September, with energy going by the end of the year. A roadshow to investors

will kick off in September. Eveready South Africa bad sales of 365m rand in the year to last September, but Hanson would not release any details of profits or net assets. However, the unit bas reported lower profits in each of the past two fiscal years, hindered by openmarket competition as South Africa reduces tariff barriers. The acquisition represents a quantum leap for Duracell,

which only set up a business in South Africa two years ago. The large zinc carbon batteries produced by Eveready South Africa are old-fashioned by Western standards, but represent an extremely profitable business in southern Africa. The operation has a factory

in Port Elizabeth and employs 900 people. It controls 95 percent of the zinc carbon round cell battery market in South Africa.

after £220m reshuffle

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Redland is set to receive £220m as a result of the planned reshuffle of its roof tiles business, leaving it poised for further expansion in Europe. The deal, first announced

last month, will create the Conproviding the tiles for one in three European roofs. Redland is injecting its whollyowned western European business into Braas, the highly successful 51 per cent-owned German subsidiary. Redland's stake is set to rise

to 56.5 per cent as a result of the swap and the cash will halve gearing to 25 per cent. Debl of around £700m, will fall even fur-ther when the sale of the rest of Redland's bricks business is announced later this month. Market estimates suggest

that disposal could bring in a total of £230m, including £71m already received from the disposal of a stake in a Dutch business in February.

Commenting on the roof tiles deal yesterday, Robert Napier, chief executive of Redland who will chair the merged group, said: "One of the reasons we are doing this is because there are areas where we can grow further. France is one example."

The new business, to be called Redland Braas Building Group, would have access to cash flow from the German company to finance expansion. by 2-3 per cent.

Other areas of Europe, apart from France, where RBBG will be under-represented, include the UK and Italy, although Mr Napier cautioned that monopolies constraints could hold back further acquisitions in the home market.

He said the deal should add tinent's biggest manufacturer, to Redland's earnings in the first year after completion. The group's own business, including roofing activities in the UK, Holland, France, Spain and Portugal, would be valued at £440m by the swap, giving an exit price-earnings ratio of 15. Operating profits of the Redland companies were £38.5m last year.

By contrast, the merger val-ues Braas at £1.6bn, equivalent to a p/e ratio of 11. Mr Napier said. Profits last year at Braas of £226m represented the lion's share of the £355m made by the

whole Redland group.

Although Redland's shares added only 1p to 410p yesterday, the deal was generally welcomed by the stock market. Robert Donald, an analyst with Nat West Markets, said it was "a breath of fresh air at Redland". which should have been done five, 10, 15 or 20 years ago.

They are injecting assets which are underperforming into a company with a good track record and that must be good news for sharebolders." He expects the merger to enhance next year's earnings per share

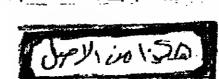
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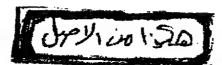
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Breweries, Pubs & Rest

FT-SE 100

Feel-good investors push Footsie through 3,800 barrier For the second day running said Southern planned to sell shares stretched to new peaks. In often brisk trading the FT-

SE 100 index moved above 3,800 points for the first time. reaching 3,825.3 with a 34.8point gain; the supporting FT-SE 250 index surged 41.8 to 4.458.5p.

The stock market was captivated by growing evidence the feel-good factor was at last coming through and hopes that interest rates could be reduced yet again. Takeover speculation remained an important influence.

National Power, the bigger of the two English generators, was the top-performing blue cbip, as rumours circulated it would today be faced with a US bid. Utilities - electricity and water - had an eventful session with stories of bids, raids and stake-huilding.

An American, Bill Dahl-

nearly half its stake in South West Electricity which it acquired last year for £1.1bn. 1mmediately the market alighted upon South West Water, already on the receiving end of two bid approaches, as Southern Co's next target.

SWW splashed 13p higher 10 729p with its two known suitors, Severn Trent and Wessex, moving ahead. Severn gaioed 12p to 6/13p and Wessex 14p to 345p. Thames was also drawn into the water whirlpool, up 17p at 586p.

As the day progressed the SWW story lost some of its appeal and NP was thrust into the limelight. In an electrifying afternion session the shares, in husy trading, surged 31.5p to 521.5p; the partly-paid jumped 30p to 387p.

It was the most dramatic ad-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN Stock market report**e**r

aloof. They fell only 2p to

with its offer once it gets the

expected Whitehall clearance.

PowerGen, the other English generator, gained 12.5p to

570p. Several of the distribu-

tor takeover hopefuls, such as

London and Yorkshire, eased.

Wessex was partly over-looked

in the stampede. There is a

growing feeling its approach to SWW was prompted by de-

fensive considerations and it

could soon be the victim of ao

the recent displays by Thorn 885p, suggesting the market be-lieved NP, whether or not it re-EMI, where the rumoured deal has failed to appear, and the jump by BET which unceive a bid, will press ahead earthed the predatory intentions of Rentokil. One of the reasons behind

the gain was speculation that Southern Co could descend on NP with a hostile bid. But NP could be too hig a mouthful even for the powerful US There were suggestions that

ket had started the NP run and some fell back on the hoary old excuse that the market had Spencer leading the rush. Housebuilders made renewed headway and properties joined in on the back of Merrill Lynch

Grand Metropolitan lost its exuberance, falling 2p to 414p, and RMC, strong recently, retreated 33p to 1,060p on prof-

Abbey National, ahead of a trading update, improved 9p to 586p and Prudential Corporation put on 7p to 446p on a reported Cazeoove recommendation.

Granada continued its advance following the Forte takeover, gaining 17p to 823p. The shares have risen oearly 200p since its January victory and a 10p gain 363p by Rentokil was in anticipation of its expected success in the battle for BET It is felt that if it wints

versal Stores and Marks & the deal become apparent. Trocadero, the leisure group, ahead 4p to 56p on talk of a share overhang about to be clcared. Rebus, a computer opera-

tion demerged from CE Heath, the insurance broker, opened at 88p and closed at 98p. But another newcomer Cardcast, a credii card fraud group, failed to hold its 85p offer price. After touching 91p the shares closed at 83p.

Northamber, the computer group, gained 13p to 289p after saying it would top market profit forecasts of up to £4.8m and Gardner, the closed circuit television business, added 2.5p to 28p, largely on institutiooal meetings.

Jarvis, the building group, nined 4.5p to 45p, a peak. It has been pulled back into profit but the market is keenly

Cosalt, with interests spreading from sea safety to holiday homes, gained 7p to

Interim figures are due next week and around £950,000 against £828,000 is expected. The group acquired Crewsaver, a maker of life jackets, in February and its contribution should help lift year's profits from £2.8m to £3.5m which puts the shares on about 8.5 times prospec-

tive earnings. 🗂 Opticians Brosgill & Leach surged 105p to 300p on Ofex. Like other opticians it has appealed against what are regarded as incorrect VAT payments over the past seven years. It has yet to receive a rebate which in relation to group profits last year of £175,000, should be signif-

overseas strike. vance by a big company the Elsewhere, retailers enjoyed a heady run with Dixons, meeticant. Brosgill has 12 outlets, awaiting confirmation of a sigits shares could follow Granabeen daught short of stock. berg, chairman of the Southmarket has seen for a long Shares of Southern Electric, da's example, moving ahead nine in Asda stores. It came nificant acquisition, perhaps a ern Co. started the rush. He powerfully as the advantages of railway maintenance business. to Ofex at 165p. while. It easily overshadowed an NP hid target, remained ing analysts, Boots, Great Uni-Share Price Data 204 Prices are in stering except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 205 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price details are a percentage of the share price. The price details are a percentage of the share price. The price details are a percentage of the share price. The price details are a percentage of the share price. The price details are price. The price details are price and price are price and price are price and price are price. The price details are price and price are price are price and price are price are price and price are price The Independent Index wed by one of the two-digit codes be Water Shares Electricity Shares High Street Banks Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpine 0171 873 4375 (830am - 530pm). Banks, Retail Calls cost 39p per minute (cheep rate), and 49p at all other times. Call charges include VAT 1700000 Marie & Spencer 940000 ASDA Group 700000 Sun Aliance 680000 Sears 670000 Lloyds TSB Monison (Mm) 780000 Seinsbury LASMO 720000 BTR

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14.00 3816.7 up 26.2

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A SPECIAL REPORT BUSINESS TRAVEL

Things are looking up for the high flyer

Business travellers, as I told an airport operators' conference earlier this month, are a deeply unreasonable hunch. We want to check in as late as possible, fly from uncrowded airports at the times of our choosing direct to our destination, or failing that enjoy a transit time just long enough to allow for some relaxed shopping at fiercely economical prices. 1 could have added that we expect every hotel to have a record of our reservation, and to supply a pristine room kined out with the latest in hi-tech and hi-comfort. The rental car should be waiting, clean and full of fuel, for an immediate gctaway. Should we decide instead to travel by train, we expect a definite edge in time and comfort over the alternatives. Oh, and by the way, our company accountants are keeping a keener eye than

ever on costs. Costs, costs, costs: everyone is seeking to control them without sacrificing quality. As this Special Report demonstrates, businesses are exploring ways to maximise flexibility while minimising expenditure. Airlines and hotels are trying to keep costs down without threatening the revenue recovery that is under way. The railways are tempting travellers with valuable new scheduling and comfort, while new US carriers are showing the way towards good-quality. low-cost service.

For a lot of businesses, the place to start controlling costs and adding value is with a written company policy on business travel. According to Carlson Wagonlit, one of the leading multinational agen-cics, only three in five European companies have a written policy, compared with 76 per cent of American businesses.

This will by necessity involve looking at the way in which travel is bought. All the old certainties are being challenged, notably the commission paid by airlines to agents. No longer is there a simple equation between the amount a

Accountants are watching expenses, but travel agents can still find the right deal for business travellers, says Simon Calder

These days, the travel agent will not survive by simply issuing a ticket", says David Radcliffe, managing director of the leading business agency, Hogg Rohinson BTI. "The agent must give value to the

Increasingly, services like

rapid visa procurement, travel medicine advice and global assistance are being taken for granted. So now the focus is switching to buying power. Hogg Robinson, like Carlson Wagonlit and American Express, uses international muscle to secure deals across the range of business travel services. There is still space for the good independent business travel agency, but more than ever those who survive and prosper will be those who are customer-focussed and are

company pays and the intimately aware of an indi-percentage the agent earns. indial client's needs.

The trend towards fee-based arrangements is accellerating. This means the client pays the net cost of travel (ie free of commission), plus a negotiated fee to the agent in exchange for the value added. So the nagging worry that your agent is recommending a particular supplier or product because of the potential commission he or

she stands to earn, is eased.

For the business traveller, meanwhile, life on the road or in the skies seems to be getting a little smoother - hut that doesn't stop us complaining surveys published this week demonstrate. American Express asked visitors to the Business Travel '96 exhibition in London what irritated them most. The number one bate was the need to check in early; a good omen, perhaps, for Denim Air and World Airlines, which in the next fortnight start new services to Holland from the 10-minute check-in airport, London City.

Official Airline Guides canvassed business travellers worldwide, and found that British executives are the ones demanding free drinks in airport lounges most noisily which is perhaps why they are also less concerned than any other nationality about whether the plane turns up on time. They also, says OAG, complain more than anyone else about fellow passengers, especially those who get

upgrades from economy. Yet the traveller who has been out of circulation for a decade (or perhaps just stuck an inordinately long stack at Kennedy airport) will find the world a rather more comfortable place than it was in 1986. That was the year when British Midland began competing on international routes from Heathrow. Increased competition has improved service on both short- and long-haul flights. It is hard to distinguish between the first class of 10 years ago and the husiness class of today - except that the middle tier nowadays is often more luxurious than the topflight of old. In recognition of this fact, increasingly many airlines are doing away with the

concept, but a second dynamic

is at work increasing comfort

to a degree unparalleled since the flying boats.
The American Express survey found three out of five travelling executives resent the lack of personal space on aircraft. Accordingly, British Airways is spending £500 million on upgrading its premium cabins, much of it on the first class product. Innovations such as individual sleeper cabins are intended to increase the present 50 per cent average load factor in First. In response, All Nippon Airways is increasing seat pitch to a Sumo-sized 82 inches on its routes to Japan.

The plane in front, of course. is still a Concorde. The supersonic aircraft this year celebrates 20 years of commercial service, but so far there is no certainty about when - or if it will be replaced. The tech-nological focus has moved to telecommunications, hut there is scant evidence that developments such as teleconferencing are reducing the amount of business travel. A Carlson Wagonlit survey found more than 80 per cent of business travellers think it unlikely that new technology will influ-ence the number of trips they

Even so, Hogg Robinson is taking a broad view of its mission and has established

teleconferencing links at its offices in Farnborough and Stockholm for use by clients for whom this is the best solution to a particular problem.

Looking to the future, life could he more comfortable yet for both the traveller and the accountant. In aviation, ever more alliances will he formed between carriers to create a more streamlined service for connecting passen-

The giant husiness travel agencies will flex their buying biceps a little more, for example by block-hooking space in premium cahins. If your agency's clients, the logic goes, are occupying 30 per cent of the Club World seats on a particular BA flight to Singapore, then the airline should pass back some of the savings on distribution costs. The same theory can apply to hotels, car-rental and rail travel in the endless hattle against costs, costs. costs - or, more positively, the search for value.



New carriers offering better deals in US

SUE WHEAT

For years the aviation map of the United States has been comfortingly familiar. The mega-carriers - American. Continental, Delta, Northwest and United - have dominated the market. But today's traveller to the US will discover that new airlines are challenging the

established leaders.

The advantages can be demonstrated using a key route such as New York to Chicago. Kiwi International (not a New Zealand airline despite its name), has established a presence at Newark and has a busy route network in the eastern US. The lowest one-way flight from Newark to Chicago's Midway on Kiwi is \$99, which is around \$50 cheaper than other carriers on the route.

Cost is, of course, only one element of the business travel equation. Many business trav-ellers prefer Newark airport to the less user-friendly JFK, though La Guardia remains first choice for those in midtown Manhattan. Chicago's Midway airport is dwarfed by O' Hare – the world's husiest – hut is much closer to the downtown Loop, to which it is now linked by rapid transit. So a low-cost

carrier can save stress, too. The established airlines are hitting back with low fares. Some are being marketed as "peanut" fares - because that's what you get for food, and that's what you pay". In the past year some fares have been cut to ludicrous levels, such as Atlanta to Orlando for \$45 or Los Angeles to Las Vegas for \$25. Small, niche operators have

considerable cost advantages. but one of these is often the absence of an international marketing effort; booking a flight on ValuJet, for example, from this side of the Atlantic is tricky. But America West, which specialises in the western US. including Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Phoenix, San Francisco. and San Jose, has an office here. It offers a four-coupon nationwide pass for £215. Buying tickets in the UK has the advantage of avoiding the 10 per cent transportation tax on air tickets

applicable in the US. Horizon Air, a subsidiary of Alaska Airlines, offers the best miles-per-buck deal with its standby airpass in the northwest US. But only the most impoverished or optimistic husiness traveller would rely on this. Instead, most executives are looking to enhanced inflight service - more like the standards we enjoy in Europe.

Clear winner in Conde Nast Traveler's annual airline surve is Midwest Express, a Milwaukee-hased carrier little known outside the US hut beloved by many business travellers - and passengers on Virgin Atlantic who take advantage of the two carriers' marketing tie-up. For no more than the usual full fares, passengers enjoy extravagant food and free Champagne. Catching a plane in America doesn't have to be just like catching a

America West 01483 440490 : Horizon Air - airpuss available at AirPass Sales, 01737,555300 Midwest Express 001 414 570

Quest Worldwide 0181-546 6000

Airlines cap agency fees

SIMON CALDER

British Airways is seeking to cut the commission paid to business travel agents, following the example of leading airlines in the US who unilaterally capped commission payments.
Instead of a fixed percentage.

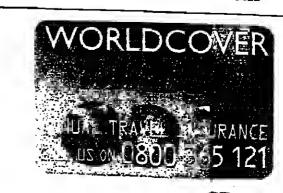
a maximum fee of, say, \$25 or \$50 is allowed. The airlines say this more adequately reflects the work done by the agent, but the bread and butter business for agents has changed radi-cally. The US division of Carlson Wagonlit, one of the leading international business agencies, last week reported that commission capping had dampened revenue growth significantly in 1995.

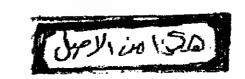
Now BA is looking hard at its distribution costs, ie how much revenue it must surrender to fill business seats. In jeopardy is not merely the agents' comfortable 9 per cent they presently enjoy on air tickets, but the whole murky husiness of overrides. Put simply, if agents sell sufficient of certain

high-value tickets on certain airlines, they earn commission above the normal rate. Some agents use this to help pay for non-revenue services, such as on-call assistance or visa facil-ities; others split the bonus with the customer, and still more use the overrides to offer

fares well below official rates. BA is using its considerable muscle to implement lower commission levels. One immediate consequence is likely to be that some revenue is diverted to other airlines, who offer better incentives to agents.

In the meantime travellers could be steered towards some unusual carriers. If the clerk at your agency commends a business-class trip to New York on Icelandair via Reykjavik, it is probably because the fare of around £1,300 return represents excellent value. But the recom-mendation might also possibly be influenced by the fact that he or she stands to make £100 in Marks & Spencer vouchers for every such booking made this month or next.





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SIMON CALDER

The Eurostar journey through the Channel Tunnel from London to Brussels points up the muddle and inconsistencies of European rail travel. You start by clanking through the south London suburbs, your gleaming express slotted in among commuter trains on lines built 150 years ago. It takes an hnur to reach the new Ashford International station. Beyond here, the train changes its electricity supply system and begin to accelerate through the tunnel, reaching Calais in under 40 minutes. There follows a hlissful but all-toobrief interlude through France when the train can travel at its 186mph maximum. Then it slows and adapts to a third electrical system, pottering through

Brussels. The city centre-to-city centre journey takes around three hours 15 minutes.

The route in the Belgian capital has oot been as successful as the Paris run, a greater distance but a faster ride. Yet Eurostar has still carved a considerable slice out of the airlines' revenues between London and Brus-sels. When the new high-speed line through Belgium opens, the journey time will be cut and the give the train a distinct edge

One big problem afflicting the railways has always been the same: compatibility of cross-border services. Spain and France, for example – two of the larger EU nations, sharing a long common border – still employ different gauges. And again, and Germany), have invested heavily in high-speed domestic rail travel, the business traveller would be forgiven for perceiving a lack of enthusiasm for n truly trans-Euro-

pean railway network.

From June this year, he or she should start to notice a difference. Thalys, the highspeed link between Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam and Cologne is due to npen, with Lille as a high-speed crossroads. Its handsome Lille Europe station will connect France, Belgium, Hnlland and Germany - and Britain via the Channel Tunnel, but slowly. The high-speed link so hadly needed hetween Ashford and London is not due to open for another six years. Meanwhile British travellers from outside the capital should

at last start 10 ootice some improvement when direct trains begin from leading cities direct to Paris later this year.

Lille will become still more important to French-bouod husiness travellers as extra services are added in destinations throughout France.

Elsewhere in Europe, trav-ellers will see benefits from the Great Belt project in Denmark, an amhitious hridge/tunnel scheme aimed at speeding travellers by eliminating ferry trans-fers between Copenhagen and Jutland. In Italy, Pendulina trains on the trunk mute between Milan and Rome are doing roughly what Britam's now-defunct Advanced Passenger Train intended to do -run at high speed nn existing

Germany's high-speed spine

from Hamburg 10 Munich is well under way, and some of the creakier old links to Berlin are being enhanced in advance of the city regaining its stalus as capital, But the ultimate way to travel through Germany - and as far as Vienna and Zurich - is aboard the City Night Line, which aims to provide five-star overnight accommodation to executives while speeding through Germany. Already some say they can discern a drop in the number of BMWs

the country.
As the Lundon-Brussels experience shows, there is still some way to go before rail is the natural choice of the husiness traveller in Europe. A trans-Alpine journey I made earlier this month summed up the problems. My international

and Mercedes roaring across

tickel required a supplement for the Italian, but not the Swiss part of the journey. After queuing for 10 minutes, 1 discovered that this could not be paid by credit card, and had to line up at the bureau de change to procure some more Swiss francs hefore reacquainting myself with the original queue. The Baselto-Bologna express left 45 minutes late from the dismally comfortless Swiss station, and devoured an entire working day in its eight-hour haul across the Alps and northern Italy. But the trip also demonstrated some of the benefits compared with flying. The extra space was welcome, the catering splendid and the views superb. And the cost (including that irritating supplement) was just a quarter

this hardly counts. Improve-ments in the air, however, are

making the poor facilities on

the ground even more painfully

apparent. I have yet to find an

Indian airport in which some

or all of the words chaotic,

uncomfortable and less-than-

clean apply. Many Indian

airports are part of military

installations, and so the provi-

sion of facilities for business

travellers does not rate highly. Indian Railways, the tradi-

tional means of getting around

the world's second most-popu-

lous country, should not be overlooked by the husiness

traveller. Hardier expatriates

have been covering the country for years in the (relative) comfort of "2AC" - second

class, air-conditioned carriages

that make perfect sense for

short or overnight journeys

such as Jaipur to Delhi, or

Varanasi to Calcutta. The

computerised booking system,

covering main lines across the

whole country, works pretty

However you reach your

destination, these days you can

be confident will be an interna-

tional-standard hotel awaiting

you. Both domestic and

international chains are well

established in business cities.

The main shock, particularly in

Bombay - receotly recamed

Mumbai - is the price of a room

and additional facilities. India

is now in line with much of the

rest of the world in terms of the

price of business travel.

Hotels upgrade to technological innovations

SUE WHEAT

These are changing times. And hotels are changing with them. The business traveller's technological needs as well as their demands for everything from health spa facilities to environmentally thoughtful poli-

cies are now being catered for. Environmental policies are rarely top of the business traveller's "must-have" list, hut many hotels are nevertheless realising that waste, water and energy management helps them cur costs, and appeals to their increasingly environmentallyaware clientele who often see such policies being implemented in Europe and the US. The International Hotels Environment Initiative has gone a long way to improving the envi-ronmental performance of many resource-hungry hotels. However getting good husi-

ness support services is of course paramount for any business traveller. Gone are the days when messages get stuck in pigeon holes in reception. now voice-mail in your room nften provides you with your own personal answerphone. Some hotels will give you business cards with your room's direct line printed on them, and a hotel that addresses the needs of the most sophisticated husiness traveller will be looking at installing technology for video telephones and ISDN

communications. As ever the US is leading the way with such state-of-the-art services, but Brilain is trolling eagerly

Finding sophisticated services is fine, even in the UK as long as your expenses stretch that far. Some hotels, like the recently refurbished Berner's Hotel in London. dedicate a whole "Club Floor"

to the husiness traveller (£195

single, £200 double).
"We wanted to put a five-star product in a four star holel so converted the fifth floor for our business customers, with a sepa-rate check-in facility, fitness centre and Cluh Lounge." explains Director of Sales, Leslie Hall.

In the Club Lounge complimentary soft drinks are served all day, a business centre is available with access to a photocopier, fax, secretarial service

computers and complimentary use of a boardroom. There is also 24 hour room service for anyone who is up all night sweating over sales figures, and a nightly networking opportu-nity where guests can meet each other from 5.30 to 7pm over a glass of champagne in the

Cluh Lounge.
Similarly, it is no problem to find luxury hotels with excellent fitness and health spa facilities. Go to New York, Beijing, Manila, Beverley Hills or Hong Kong and you can luxuriate in the Peninsula Hntels' luxury spas, and enjoy an "executive relaxation day" for a mere \$285.60. Closer to home and at the budget end nf business travel, even the Forte freephone number (0800 404040) could tell me that the Post House in Swindon has its own leisure club, indoor pool, sauna, gym, en-suite facilities, hair dryer, tea, coffce, and remote control

But for the hudget business traveller who actually wants to do some work, searching for a mom with a phone that reaches the desk can be a difficult task, let alone finding one with a socket to plug your modem into. Unfortunately the Forte freephone number couldn't tell me if rooms at the Post House, Swindon had phones, let alone a modem socket.

Mike Gates of Hogg Rohinson BTI insists the best way to find accommodation that suits your needs is through good husiness travel agent. We keep a database of clients so that every time we research a booking for you we automatically know what facilities you oeed when you are away,"

Facilities for the hudgelconscious husiness traveller also are slowly improving. Holiday Inn is introducing an Express Brand room which will offer husiness facilities with accommodation at around £40 per night, and are increasingly taking hookings over the internet.

So if you're on the road and you want to book a room, just click-oo to the virtual reality reception area and check out the facilities for yourself health, husiness or otherwise. That is, if you can find anywhere

of the equivalent air fare. Indian air carriers raise standards

In other places, the concept would not seem odd. You contact the airline or a travel agent and book a flight. At the airport, you board a modern, well-maintained aircraft, lt departs on schedule, and you enjoy a pleasant meal and a drink en route. Upon arrival, you are promptly re-united with your luggage. Yet for long-suffering business travellers in India, this sort of thing is a reve-

For decades, the state-owned domestic carrier Indian Airlines enjoyed a monopoly on flights within the country. Tales of overhooking and arbitrary cancellation were legion. More worryingly, questions were raised about maintenance standards after the loss of an Indian Airlines Airbus A320. During an industrial dispute the company deployed aircraft and crews from the Soviet Union, which did little lo dispel concern over safety.

Eventually, evidence from abroad about the benefits of competition in aviation was takeo on board and, slowly, the airways over India were liberalised. A oumber of new carriers are oow competing with Indian Airlines, and each other, oo domestic routes. The potential rewards are considerable: besides a pool of frustrated business travellers, there are approximately 60 million middle-class Indians (even



Not just toy trains: Indian Railways still provide a viable mode of transport for business travellers Photograph: Simon Calder

using John Prescott's definitioo

The improvements have been rapid. One of the first newcomers on the scene was Modilust. The "lust" in the title is a reference to the German national airline Lufthansa, which maintains the carrier's Boeing 737s - and lends elements of its corporate identity. Initially Modiluft was

ohliged to markel its services as a curious charter/scheduled hybrid, but now rules have been relaxed.

Modiluft is competing for custom with Jel Airways, which has built up ao extensive network using the ubiquitous 737. I found standards on a twohour flight from the Himalayan foothills to Delhi to be gratifyingly in line with those on

intra-European services. The meal was excellent, though people who enjoy an alcoholic drink might blanche at the insipid squash which accompanied the food. The view from the window seal at 30,000 feet, watching Everest and its partners march past at eye level, was unparalleled.

To see how Indian Airlines

tion. I flew on the national carrier from Agra to Varanasi. There was no evidence of overbooking, and inflight service was perfectly adequate. The flight was an hour hehind schedule for no immediately apparent reason, but compared with some of the delay horror stories which have achieved near-legendary status among

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·lines cap

ency fees

Leicestershire

Cricket

145-3 dec

Match drawn

212-7

HENRY BLOFELD

reports from The Parks

Leicestershire 299-4 dec &

Oxford University 207-6 dec &

Some brilliant strokeplay by

Iain Sutcliffe and Andrew Ridley, who put on 142 in 30

overs for the second wicket.

took Oxford close to a remark-

able victory over Leicester-

shire. After being left to score

238 in 90 minutes plus 20 overs,

the university were 80 for 1

It looked a dull draw, but in

when the last 20 overs began.

the first over of the last 20,

Ridley straight-drove Adrian

Pierson's first half over the

sightscreen for six and Sutcliffe

swept the third for another, and

and for a long time Leicester-

shire had five men back on the

boundary hut were still unable

Oxford needed 92 from 11

overs when Sutcliffe cut Gordon

Parsons and Pierson held an ex-

cellent tumbling catch deep in the gully. Gul Khan who had

failed earlier in the day by six

runs to make a century in his

first innings for Oxford, came

half forward to drive Darren

Maddy and was lbw - this was

Maddy's first first-class wicket.

three good strokes before being

run out while Ridley went on in

fine style, playing shots all round

the wicket. He swung Parsons

square for six and reached his

first first-class hundred in 101

balls, with eight fours and four

Mark Wagh played two or

to check the flow of runs.

Runs came at a hectic pace

the final assault had begun.

sixes. When he skied Maddy to backward point Oxford's hero-

ic challenge had ended.
But it had been a wonderful

day for university cricket, set up

by a good declaration from

James Whitaker, Leicester-

shire's new captain. In their sec-

ond innings, the county's main

batsmen all played some nice

strokes, which will have done

Khan, who was 56 not out,

continuing to play some glori-

ous strokes. He faced 123 balls

and hit 12 fours and one six in

his 94. He was released by

Essex last year and in this form

will surely make them have embarrassing second thoughts.

(Lelessenshre won tess, final day of three! LEICESTERSHRE - First lenings 290 for 4 duc (B F Smith 123 no. P A Noon 100 no. V) Wells

OXFORD UNIVERSITY - First hinlings

Extres (64, lb10) Total (for 6 dec, 67 overs) — Call continued: 5-176, 6-187,

The day had begun with

their confidence good.

sport

Sobanska relishes the dog days

Mike Rowbottom on the Pole defending her title in Sunday's London Marathon

to think of it, for her dog. The Pole who made her name with last year's unex-pected London Marathon victory has since finished fourth in the World Championships, and as she prepares to defend her title on Sunday her faithful hound and sometime training partrer Figa is not far from her thoughts.

If there were a marathon for dogs, Figa would surely have an outstanding chance of bonours. Last week, for example, his mistress estimates he ran 70 kilometres alongside her in her home town of Poznan - all the more remarkable given the fact that Figa is a dachsund. But then Figa translates into English as fig - and we all know what they can do for you.

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Sobanska's own performance last April was pretty remarkable as she outsprinted Portugal's Manuela Machado - who went on to win the world title - and finished just 10 seconds clear in what was the closest finish in the race's 16-year history.

Sobanska, who will turn 27 five days after Sunday's event, was far from being one of the favourites in London last year. Having started marathon running in 1991, two third places in Berlin in 1993 and 1994 had establisbed ber as a respectable competitor, but her fortitude in the final run-in down the Mall took everyone by surprise.

'I was not expected to win in London by any of the media, or my friends, or even my family," sbe said, "There were a few press conferences organised

for me when I got back home. "At the moment in Poland it is very difficult finding sponsorship," she said through an interpreter, "Interest is geared towards football and motor sports rather than the

marathon. But political changes in ber home country have meant that. unlike previous years, athletes

It has been quite a year for Mal-gorzata Sobanska. And, come a nominal fee to their bome fed-eration – in her case, a token eration - in her case, a token \$200 (£130) a year.

That has allowed her to use her winning bonus of \$55,000 (£36,000) from 1995 to huild a house for herself and her new husband; and, who knows, perhaps a new kennel for Figa.

She had another good payday in Tokyo last October, where she finished the marathon in sixth position, one place ahead of the runner she identifies as her main rival this Sunday, Liz McColgan.

The Scotswoman appears to be in far hetter form than last year, when she finished fifth behind Sobanska in London, but the Pole is drawing confidence from recent road races in Florida and Alhnquerque, where she has broken her personal bests for five and 10 kilometres.

Sobanska's fine, dark features grow gloomy at the recall of the World Championship race, which was subsequently discovered to have been 400 metres short. As the fastest finisher, she believes she would bave had a medal had the full distance been run.

No such hiccups are likely to occur in London, however. And given ideal conditions, Sobanska believes she is capable of lowering her best of 2hr 27min 43sec to something closer to 2:25.

That would take McColgan into new territory if she were to maintain a challenge and give the event another finish to relish However it turns out, Sobanska's parents will not be in London to witness the struggle.
"They don't like to watch me

running and suffering." Sobanska said. "My mother particularly worries about me because I am the youngest in the family. It is probably best that they are not to be here." But it is good that she is.

The 6ft 2in Welsbman Iwan Thomas, who is aiming for a relay place at the Olympics, went fourth in the all-time United Kingdom 400m rankings with a now need to pay no more than 44.66sec victory in Johannesburg.



Come in No 11: David Thomas, of Hampshire's 2nd XI, foiled by England Under-19 at Southampton

nounce the result around

lunchtime. Apart from the 40-

year-old Botham, the other

seven candidates are the for-

mer England captain Graham

Gooch, Kim Barnett, Brian

Bolus, John Edrich, David

Graveney, Geoff Miller and

Chris Cowdrey

"I'm perfectly happy with all morrow morning and an-

Lord's prepared for a Botham victory

Lord's are ready to welcome Ian Botham if he wins the election to become an England selector. Botham's nomination by

Dertyshire earlier this month seemed to have provoked worries in the corridors of power, with counties immediately being reminded about a possible clash of interests because of the

NEWMARKET

2.00: 1. SHERPAS (Pat Eddery) 7-2 tav; 2. Sasura 9-2; 3. Valedictory 9-1, 10 ran, hd. 1. (H Ceci, Newmarket), Tote: £3.30; £1.50, £1.50, £3.20. Dual Forecast: £8.80, Computer Straight Forecast: £17.42. Tho: £8.70, Non Runner: Petrolio.

2.35: 1. ELSALEET (I. Dettort) 7-2; 2. Watch Me 15-2; 3. Omera 3-1 fav, 11 ran, hd, 5. IJ Gosden, Newmarket), Fote: £5.10; £2.20, £2.80, £1.60, DF; £35.10. CSF; £30.50. Into £16.00, Intisab (6-1) withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 applies to board prices only, deduct 10p in pound.

3.05; 1. PASSION FOR LIFE (Pat Eddery) 11-4 kay 2. Redamed 15-2; 3. Struggler 11-2, 13 ran, 1/4, 2. (6 Lewis, Epsom). Tota; 53-50; 51-70, £1-90, £2-30. DF: £13.40. CSF: £22.21. This: £43.10.

3.40: 1. THRILLING DAY (D Harnson) 20-1; 2. Bint Saisabil 7-2 Jt fav; 3. Honest

ex-captain's extensive media involvement.

But now, as the former allrounder's campaign apparently gathers momentum in the runup to tonight's voting deadline, Lord's officials insist they have "no problem" with any of the eight candidates to join Ray Illingworth's selection panel.

Guest 16-1, 11 ran. 7-2 Jt fav Mard For The

Hills (Sth), sh hd, 2½; (N Graham, Newmar-leu), Tobe: £26,50; £5,20, £1,70, £3,40, Dual Forecast; £44,50, Computer Straight Forecast: £81,73, Tho: £228,30.

Alan Smith, said. "All eight are good people and I don't find it unhealthy to have that many candidates. It has creat-

ed a lot of public interest, which Smith will count the votes to-

of them," the Test and County

Cricket Board chief executive,

Jackpot: not won lood of £8.125.78 come FOLKESTONE

4.15: 1, SANMARTINO (Pat Eddery) evens 1.20; 1. AFM EON JANE (A McGone) 7-4 far; 2. Poetry 10-1; 3. Proud Look 9-4, 12 ram. nk, 4. () Gosden, Newmarket), Totac 52.30; £.1.30, £2.50; £1.30. 0; £18.80, CSF; £19.58, Tno; £6.40, NR; Samsota Ryte, fay; 2. Unchanged 7-2; 3. Thelianah B-1. 4 ran. 2-7; 6. (B Hills, Lamboum), Tote: £1.40. Dual Forecast: £1.80. Computer Straight Forecast: £4.24.

Straight Forecast: 24.24,
4.45; 1. SRY DOME (P Robinson) 14-1;
2. Weiville 11-2; 3. White Plains 7-1. 23
ran, 9-2 it fass Waypoint (4th) & Sustach,
hd, 2. (M Tompkins, Newmarket). Tota:
£16.40; £3.00, £2.20, £2.50. DP: £88.10,
CSF: £83.57, Tricast: £546.68, Tric: £208.70,
http://doi.org/10.1008/10.100 1.50: 1. DEEPLY VALE (A Lekeman) 11-2; 2. Schanor Ridge 15-2; 3. Mazzarevilo 14-1: 4. Pointer 33-1. 16 ran. 5-1 fav Geglesevick Ger (5th), 244, sirl of, 16 L Moore, Epsorni, Tote; £7,40; £1,70, £1,70, £3,30, £10,30, DF; £15-70, CSF; £44.96. Thease: £509 £2, 1m; £262-90. 5.20:1. DOVALY (Pat Eddery) 8-1; 2. Secho evens fav; 3. Generoosun 14-1. 16 ran, 1/2, 1/4. (H. Cecil, Newmarket), Total: £E.40; £2.40, £1.40, £2.50, DF: £6.30, CSF: £16.44, Tno: £15.00. £509.62, Trio: £262.90.

2.20: 1. LADY CAROLINE LAMB (TQuin) 8-13 fev; 2. Primo Lad 6-1; 3. Lest Bot Not Least 11-4. 5 ren. 24-(M Channon). Tote: £1.30; £1.10, £1.80. DF: £3.00.CSF: £4.50. 2.56; 1. TDY PRINCESS (K Datey) 16-1; 2. Hattaafeh 20-1; 3. Stalled 4-1 fav. 16 ran. ¼, 5. (C Britan, Newmarkel). Tote: £21.30; £4.70, £6.90, £1.40, £5.10. DF; £99.50. CSF. £268.95. Tricast: £1,395.71.

3.25:1. PRIENDLY BRAVE A Whelan 11. 4: 2. Moujeeb 5-1: 3. Petraco 2-1 fav. 7 ran. ¼. nk. Miss Gay Kelloway, Newmarketi, Totec 54.10: £1.90, £2.70, DF: £10.30. CSF: £15.68. NR: Aljaz.

Sea, Nr. Ajaz.
 A.00; 1. SHARAF (K Derley) 15-8 far.; 2.
 Northern Fleet 5-7; 3. Horesti 11-2; 14 ran.
 G. 14-4; U Dunton, Arundell, Tote: £2-80; £1-40.
 £1-70, £1-80.
 DF: £2-90.
 CSF: £7-15.
 True £4-90.
 Non Runner: Arm For Starden.

60ff.
4.35; 1. SANDABAR (K Brackhaw) 5-1; 2.
Consort 5-2; 3. Crazy Chief 7-1 fav. 32 ran. 34. Nt. (M Stoute, Newmarket), Totac £4.50; £2.40, £1.70, £1.10, DP. £10.10, CSP. £18.49. Tno: £29.50.

5-12: X. SCOTTISH BANKS (WP > SOOT) 5-12: X. Kingchip Boy 9-1; 3. Manabar 12-1.14 ran. 7-2 fav Zahid. 4, 1-4. IP Webber, Banbury, Tote: 58.90; 52.20, 51.70, 53.00, DF; £105-20, CSF; £50.51, Tricast £485,22. Tro: £344.90, NR; Pennine Whot. Placepot: £57.10, Quadpot: £21.70, Place 8: £45.03, Place 5: £34.70.

HEXHAM

2.10: 1. ROYAL EXPRESSION (P Niver) evens for; 2. Ratitisa 11-4; 3. Eta Mata 16-1. 11. ram. 6, 27s. (Mrs M Roveloy). Tota: £1.90; £1.10, £1.80, £7.00. DP. £2.40. CSP. £4.21. Trot: £10.60.

2.45:1. HAM N'EGGS (R Gamby) 15-8 fay; 2. Nightand Way 6-1; 3. Allerby 50-1. 20 ran, 24c, 11. (M Harrenord, Tota: £2.60; £1.50, £1.80, £17-20, Dr. £5.80, CSF, £14.79, NR; Baher, Tro: £190.10.

1; 2. Forgrane 8-1; 3. Westerico Andy 12-1; 2 ren. 11-8 tay Ruslimit (4th). 13, 16, (P Beaumord). Tota: £6-30; £1-60, £2-10, £2-10, DF. £18-90. CSF. £47-48. Tocast: £508.95.

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diately before you have collected your four tokens, but you will require the tokens for final confirmation of your booking,

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ply. These are published in Blakes Country Cottages brochures and are available upon request. 7 Prices exclude optional insurance and pet charges (where applicable).



Sutcliffe and Hern Ridley rattle Alhae

7-212.
Dividing: Multinly 9,4-2-31-0; Millins 6-1-21-1; Parsons 10-2-43-1; Person 9-0-58-0; Wells 2-0-20-0; Maddy 5-0-292-2.
Umpires: A G T Whitehead and N G Cowley.

Exception 4-1, 11 ren. 24:, 4, 16 Returnis). Tota: £1.60; £1.10, £1.60, £1.60, DF: £14.20, CSF: £14.82, Trio: £17.40.

3.50; 1. NEW TRIBE d. O'Hara 5-2 faz; 2. Kralingen 33-1; 3. Brafferton Bella 20-1, 10 ren. 17, 16. U Britett). Tota: £2.80; £2.00, £26.10, £3.00, DF: £407.40, CSF: £64.26. Trio: £138.70.

4.25: 1. WESTWELL BOY (A Cobbin) 8-

5.00: 1. RASCALLY (A Thornton) 11-2; 2. Charity Crupader 3-1 fan 3. Mister Yrick 11-2, 10 ran, 14, 13. (Miss L Soddell), Totac 43.0; 62.00, 61-30, 62.00, DF 27.40, CSF 621.20, Tricest £87.17. Tro: £10.50, After

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Cestership Alhaarth's aim Stakes at Royal Asec she will not find the o

Alhaarth, it seems, will not be using his local saver travel pass after all this week for Newbury's Greenham Stakes. The griddlehot favourite for both the 2,000 Guineas and the Derby will now see his nome course only out of the hox window as he travels to contest Newmarket's Craven Stakes tomorrow.

Major Dick Hern, the colt's trainer, has had the weather maps spread across the table at his Lambourn yard and the dcduction is that bad weather will visit Newbury on Friday.

"The Major will talk to Willic [Carson] and Sheikh Hamdan [Al Maktoum] tonight hut it sounds like it is more likely to be here than Newbury," Angus Gold, the racing manager to Alhaarth's owner, said at Headquarters yesterday. "He does not want too hard a race on soft

ground at this stage of the year. "Everyone is talking about him carrying a penalty here, but other than Rio Duvida, the more proven horses are carry-

ing a penalty as well anyway." Connections have already collected the 2,000 Guineas with Nashwan, who went to the Day, who had been whipped up Classic without a race. Cir- to an early peak of perfection cumstances have altered with the latest hero. "This is a different type of horse from Nash- diary. Neil Graham's runner wan, who did everything very may now go for the Coronation

does just enough and that's it. as lethargic. As soon as he sees his wagon and he goes past his lead horse that's it. He's working very well and the Major couldn't be happier with him but this is just to

sharpen the horse up." Bint Salsabil had her 1,000 Guineas sharpener for the same team yesterday in the Nell Gwyn Stakes and just failed to hold the late burst of Thrilling

> RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Spree Cross (Cheltenham 4.35) NB: Smart Alec (Newmarket 3.05)

Day. The staying-bred filly ran the mirror image of the race expected from her, leading all the way before capitulating in the final strides. Carson put this down to lack of fitness, John Dunlop, Bint Salsabil's trainer,

Sheikh Hamdan, who is some way behind Rolf Harris in the outwardly jolly table, said: "I thought a furlong out she would draw away hut the jockey said

she got tired."
This was the day for Thrilling against fillies who had red rings surrounding future events in the

generously at home," Gold said. Stakes at Royal Ascot, where "This is a pretty idle horse who she will not find the opposition

The Abernant Stakes was captured by Passion For Life, who would probably flinch if you flashed an item of cutlery in front of him. Geoff Lewis's horse has had the more damaging silverware of scalpels glinting in front of him twice already in his short life, firstly to remove bone chips from his knees and then any chance he had of being a father. The potential stud value of

Sacho does not appear as good as it was either. The second favourite for the Derby was beaten on his seasonal debut and is now 25-1 (from 14-1) with Ladbrokes for the Classic. He was the first of many idols who will fall this week.

The spring of the Flat season is when potential Group horses emerge like ducklings swimming in a rip tide to keep up with their mother's stern. Before the end of this month there will be others like Sacho paddling to stop being swept back over the weir.

1,000 CUINEAS (Newmarket, 5 May) Leading ante-post odds: Coral: 11-10 Bosra Sham, 4-1 Blue Duster, 8-1 Bert Salsebil & Bint Shadayid, 10-1 A Votre Sante. Lactoroloss: 11-8 Bosra Sham, 7-2 Blue

Duster, 8-1 Ban Shadayd, 10-1 A Votre Sante, Birt Saksabel, William Hill: 11-8 Bosra Sham, 7-2 Blue Duster, 8-1 Birt Shadayd, 10-1 A Votre Sante, 12-1 Birt Saksabil. Results, page 26



NEWMARKET

2.35: ROVING MINSTREL, a highly creditable 11/4 lengths second to Stone Ridge in the Lincoln Handicap at Doncaster - having won the race in 1995 - would be better suited by a mile on softer ground but should be fitter than most of these. Monaassib and Tarawa will probably be better for the race and it is worth noting that the bottom two -Castel Rosselo and Othorhombus must carry much more than their true handicap weights.



3.05; FIRST ISLAND, who showed a good turn of foot to land the Lon-caster Mile, can make his fitness count. Smart Alec has been working well and looks the danger.

3.40: DESERT ROY, who beat subsequent winner Leonine a short-head in the prestigious Moorestyle Convisial Maiden Stakes at York last August, was a heavily-backed cofavourite for the Group Two Mill Reef Stakes at Newbury the foling month but finished tailed-off. Obviously something was amiss there and it is may be worth giving this well-bred coll another chance Horris Hill Stakes winner To weed Ridge looks weighted right up to his best while Cayman Kai and Lucky Lionel are not sure to stay,

4.15: BEAUMONT, eight lengths second to Mentalasanythin at South-well in February, has a lively each-way chance on the form he showed on his previous start wheo frounc-ing the same rival by eight lengths at Wolverhampton in January oo only 51b better terms. He goes on this ground. The big danger may be the lightly raced maiden Speed To Lead, who was a length secood to the fair-ty useful Tinashaan at Yarmouth last July before finishing 5½ lengths third to Al Widyan and Beauchamp Jade at Leicester last October.

Lionel flair can swing it

GREG WOOD

The biggest surprise on the first day of the Craven meeting was the sight of the queue at the ice-cream kiosk outnumbering that for the steaming seafood curry by at least 10 to one. But. while the Arctic winds are missing this year, one tradition at least seems sure to be resumed.

The Free Handicap threw up a Guineas winner 12 months ago - Harayir, who won the 1,000, finished second to Diffident - and even if today's field does not contain a future Classic winner or not, as three-yearold handicaps go it is an interesting contest, with several Group-class horses spread across a nine-pound range.

Tumbleweed Ridge took the Horris Hill Stakes last year, hut it was a slowly-run race and probably unreliable form. There are doubts too about Cayman Kai, who may not stay, and World Premier, who suffered badly from colic last season, and Lucky Lionel (next hest 3.40). the mount of Frankie Dettori. is the one to back. A Royal Ascot winner last year, this track and trip should suit him.

Two others to watch closely are Smart Alec (3.05), who returns after a long lay-off but has heen working exceptionally well, and FAHS (nap 4.15), a mtriguing recruit to Reg Akehurst's team. Off today's mark, Fahs would go close even without the Akehurst magic.

NEWMARKET

2.00 Kerry Ring 2.35 Roving Minstrel 3.05 FIRST ISLAND (nap)

4.45 Dowry 5.20 Mubarhin 3.40 Desert Boy

GOING: Goud to Firm.

STALLS: Certre, except. 4.15 far side, ORAW ADVANTAGE: None.

If Right-hand course with 1m 2f straight.

If Course is SW of town on A 1301. But hisk from Newmarket railway station (served by London, King's Cross). ADMISSION: Club 514 (16 to 25-year-olds 58); Grandstand & Paddock 510 (16 to 25-year-olds 55); Siver Ring 53, CAR PARK; Members 51; remainder free.

HYPERION

SIS

ERADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS; J Gooden—50 winners from 330 runners gives a success ratio of 14,0% and a loss to a \$11 level stake of \$70,49; H Geell—49 winners, 238 runners, 20,6%, 4236,32; E Hannon—43 winners, 508 runners, 8,6%, 4201,25; B Hills — 81 winners, 258 runners, 12,3%, 598,46.

ERADING JOCKERSE PAR Eddery — 97 winners, 443 rides, 21,9%, 57,90; L Dectord — 87 winners, 477 rides, 14%, 51,23,78; W Swyinburg — 54 winners, 371 rides, 14,6%, 52,6,44; W Carson — 49 winners, 445 rides, 11%, 558,70.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None. WINNERS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTAINCE RUNNERS: Gothenburg (3,40) sent 200 miles from M Johnston's Middleham stable in North Yorkshipe.

2.00 GEOFFREY BARLING MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £6,000

		added 3YO fillies 7f Penalty Value £4,815
1	30-	BALOUSTAR (USA) (174) (R M E Taylor) S Woods 8 11
2	6-0	CD SUPER TARGETING (13) (Cacular Detributors) M Charmon 8 11
3	5-	CHARLOTTE CORDAY (177) (A E Opperhemer) G Wagg 8 11
4		CHLOE'S ANCHOR IS Fusion W O'Gorman 8 11 Fmon O'Gorman 17
Ē		CLASSIC ROYALE (USA) (Classe Bloodstock Pic) S Williams 8 11 A Mackey 9
٤	3 0-	6800Y (202) (Lord Hartington) O Morley 8 11
7	4.	HIPPY (166) (D Sett) C Britain 8 11
8	3-	KERRY RING (186) (Shelish Mohammad) J Gosdan 8 11 Depter 12
g		LA PELLEGRINA (R E Sangsteri P Chapple-Hyam 8 11
		NUNSHARPA (187) (T O Hotand-Maren) J Farshave 8 11 D Harrison 14
1	1 40-	PERT POINT (211) (Lady Tennant) R Harmon 8 11
1	2 50 3 4	POLISH WIDOW (13) (A E Oppenherment G Wragg 8 11
1	3 4	REALLY A DREAM (172) (Peter R Prichard) M Stone 8 11M J Kinano 15
1	4	SALEEMAH (USA) (Hamdan Al Makoumi J Dunlop 8 11
I	5	SINGAPORE STING (USA) (Bernard Gover) H Cacil 8 11
1	6 0-	TAWAADED (194) (Homidan Al Makeoum) P Walwyn 8 11
1	7 6	YOUNG ANNABEL (USA) (15) (Indent/Burns) C Divier 8 11

— 17 declared —

BETTINO: 2-1, Kerry Ring, 5-1 Resily A Droun, 8-1 Stagespore Sting, La Pellegrina, 10-1 Salos Higgs, 14-1 Charlotte Cordsy, 16-1 offsets.

1995: Warning Shadows 3 8 11 8 Doyle 7-1 (C E Britten) 12 ran

Kerry Ring, a daughter of Seder's Wells, was an unlucky loser against Jackson Hill at Don-caster at the backend. Beaten a length after a tardy start, her experience puts her in the picture, though the eye drops on a couple of likely tasty newconvers in SALEEMARI and Sin-gapore Sting. John Dunloy's Storm Bud filly out of a Secretarist more has been shaping with plenty of promise at home. Those who saw Henry Ceclis Magnificent Style ping home at Kemption on Easter Monday will be on the stable's Singapore Sting, who is by the sports or Dayur out of the American champion more, Ambassador Of Luck. Polish Widow's be-come than her Lebestor run a formight ago would suggest. Reality & Dream and Hippy and others to have shown promise as a juvertile, while newconner La Pellegtine, related to Guneas winner Las Mennas, Italis from 3 yard in top form.

RACING & FOOTBALL OUTLOOK RATED HANDICAP (CLASS B) £12,500 added 7f Penalty Value

12,	013113-	TARJONA (137) (C) (Mrs.) Callaghan) N Callaghan 4 9 7
2	10000-0	KAYVEE (25) (D) (J H Reimond-Wagson) G Harwood 7 9 7
3	403021-	MONAASSID (179) (D) (Malgourn Al Maldourn) E Dunlop 5 9 6
ŧ	22/1202	BLOMBERG (179) (D) (Comet Group Pict J Fanshave 4 9 3
5	510063-	ASTRAC (181) (0) (Cive Tecomb) R Alenury 5 9 3
3		ROVING MINISTREL (25) (Mrs.) McMahon) 8 McMahon 5 9 1
7		PRINCERFORTS PAL (2005) (Mass E G Macagester) C Britain 5 9 1
3		EMERSING MARKET (196) (Philip Wroughon) J Dunlop 4 8 13
•		SASSEEDO (USA) (145) (C) (S Flistok) W O'Gormen 68 11
Ø	220050-	AMERICA A REER (279) (D) (A Mecca) 8 Hambury 4 8 10
1		CHRISTIMAS MASS (13) (Peter R Prochard) R Hannon 4 8 5
2		PRIMA COMMINIA (268) (Dr Frank S 8 Ched) 6 Woods 4 8 4
L3		CASTEL ROSSELO (14) (D) (T J Dawson) R Hams 8 8 4
4		ORTHORHOMBUS (13) (D) (Alexander MacGillotay) O Coegroe 7 8 4
-		

Minmum weight; 8st 4th. Ture handicup weigher; Prima Conton 8st 2th. Cassel Rosselo 7st 8th, Ontonombus 6st, BETTING: 4-1 Review Ministret, 9-2 Morumessilo, 5-1 Territon, 8-1 Blomberg, Enterging Markett, 10-1 Astract, Kayene, 14-1 Others.

1996: Covernor George 4 9 4 Pat Eddery 13-2 U L Durlop) 21 ron

FORM GUIDE

FORM GUIDE

BLOMBIERG Is in with a shout after running away with a Doncaster melden first time up last season. He came to beet Two O'Clock Jump in the Easter Stakes at Kempton afterwards, but was just outstayed over that mile. The ability was retained after the absence and he was a shade unludy to be bearen by Monasella at Doncaster (70) in October. He with have progressed from three to four so has every chance of reversing the form on the 2to worse terms, Monasella will again set them all a task on the ground - and his stablemate literant ran emoker her yesterday in the Abement, the shaper ritip maybeat the improved Tarawar, especially with the ground noting so fast yesterday, Roving Ministrel so nearly landed the Uncoln double with a fine second to Stone Ridge, Hers 6 rock-sold sort, his stable had a winner at Warnick on Saturday, and only the in-form Celestial Key beat him at this destance at Newbury last Junic. Emerging Market is a stip on his three-length second to Sorgeyev at Begitton early last season.

Selection: BLOMBERG

3	3.05	EARL OF SEFTON STAKES (CLASS A) (Group 3) £30,000 added 1m 1f Penalty Value £19,188	C4
1	112300-	LUSO (199) (Saeed Manaria) C British 4 8 4	_M J Kilman
2	3/15016-	DESERT SHOT (228) (CD) (Maldourn Al Maldourn) M Strute 6 8 13	Pat Edda
3	05260-0	LEAR WHITE (USA) (0) (General Horse Advertising SRL) P Kelloway 5 8 13	_R Cochra
4	52402-6	BEAUCHAMP JAZZ (25) (E Pensar) J Dunky 4 8 10	Re
5	32452 1	FIRST ISLAND (27) (Mollers Racing) G Wrang 48 10	M 19
6	215210-	GABR (193) (C) (Hamdan Al Malagum) R Amstrong 6 8 10	W Care
7	210131-	RESTRUCTURE (187) (CD) (Month) Myers) Mrs J Cecil 4 8 10	_Paul Edde
8	11140/4-	SACRAMENT (348) (Cheveley Park Stud) M Stoure 58 10	T Quie
9		SMART ALEC (550) (C) (Gerald Leigh) L Cument 4 8 10.	

BETTRIC: 5-2 Restructure, 11-4 First Island, 4-1 Luso, 9-2 Desert Shot, 8-1 others 1996: Desert Shot 5 8 10 W R Swindsom 5-2 (M R Stoute) 7 rod FORM GUIDE

WORLD PREMIER, a proven performer when fresh and a Royal Ascot winner, is the fancy at decent odds. Some of his mals have superior form, but he looked a hrindy sort when landing the Chesham Stakes and looks nailed on to approximate this seventh hunding on his July Stakes mining when third, conceding 3tb, to Tagula with backy Llowel (2tb better today) five lengths behind him. World Premier was further behind Tagula in the Pitx Morny at Deauvillo. mough still two lengths bester than Lucky Lloned, but he returned home with coils so probably didn't give his true running. The form book says a win for Turmbleweed Ridge, , who has won on both fast and soft ground. The Horris Hill win in the mud was particularly impressive, though he's hard to knock on the firm also after his fighting second to Royal Applicase in the Gimerack at York with Gothenberg over four lengths behind and now 80 better off. Richard Honnon has a preference for Cayman' Kall over Lucky Lonel. The part book each other took year.

Selection: WORLD PREMIER

3.40 EUROPEAN FREE HANDICAP (CLASS A) (Listed) C4. 241221. TUMBLEWEED RIDGE (1931) (D) (Tho Tumbleweed Partnerstop) 8 Meet an 9.7 JM J Kinane 8 324222. CAMMAN KAI (1985) 6 A N Vigru R Harmon 9.7 Pet Eddery 4 252336. WORLD PREMIER (243) 648 C E Bonani C Britan 9.6 8 Doyle 2 151033. LILICKY LIONEL (USA) (2021) (C) Worton Betamin R Harmon 9.6 1 Dethor 6 120. VARIOS (223) Francian AI Mactourny H Thomson Jones 9.2 9 Pet Hills 1 11040-0 GOTHEWEENG (13) (Brian Yeardey Commental Utif) M Johnston 8.13 J Meeter 3 16. DESIGN 807 (216) (Lord Weinston & Hon Smoth Weinston) P Chapple Hyori 8.13 J Reid 7 1-7 PROJECTION (USA) (25) (C) (GF) (4 Abdulla 8 Hills 8.12 1 Linky Lione) 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.1 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione) 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.1 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.1 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.1 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Tumbleweet Ridge 3.2 Center Met 4.1 Design 8.1 Linky Lione 7.1 Visible 1.2 Linky Linky 1.2 Linky 1.2 Linky 1.2 Linky 1

BETTHER: 5-4 Tumblewood Ridge, 3-1 Cayman Kal, 4-1 Desert Boy, 5-1 Locky Lional, 7-1 Yarob, 10-1 Projection, 12-1 others 1995: Orlident 3 9 5 M J Knane 11-10 (A Fabre, France) 12 rag

FORM GUIDE

Smart Alec will have a strong following on the comeback attempt, after the stable's win with the impressive Lucky Di in the Magnotia Stakes at Kempton on Easter Monday, Lucky Di had been off the course for nimost a year, but it's been two seasons since we have seen Smart Alec. Linbeaten as a juvenile with two classy course wins, Smart Alec is reported back in top condition after his Injury a year ago, but he has it to prove whereas DESERT SHOTTIs a past without of the race and totally at home on this type of ground. Overhury was all the rage 12 months ago, but Desert Shot got to hem incide the final furing and betted on strongly for a head success. He has a 3th penalty this time but still appeals, and his stablemans Sacrament looks suspect of the bop on his first start since cracking a kneet boncaster Mile. Third in the Jecsey Stakes at Royal Ascot, he is going back there in June in an attempt to emulate the stable's Neothoute in the Group Two Queen Ann Stakes so Geoff Wrage must rate him highly. Liseo must surely find the tip too sharp, Reacechamp Jazz looks out of his depth, while Lear White showed nothing in the Easter Stakes.

Selection: DESERT SHOT

[115	BABRAHAM HANDICAP (CLASS C) £8,000 added CA 1m 4f Penalty Value £6,108
1		AT LIBERTY (9) (Bruce Adams) R Hannon 4 10 0
2	162000-	BOB'S PLOY (206) (Mrs. M Barwell M Tomokins 4 10 0
3	3/034-30	STATAJACK (34) (C) (D) (Ms. M.E. Slede) O Elsmonth 89 11
4	2542-53	BENFLEET (85) (D) (BF) (C G Donoven) R Armstrong 5 9 9
5		OUT ON A PROMUSE (11) (Paul Green) N Waller 497C Rotter 11
6	241210-	PICKENS (USA) (202) (D) (Philip J Goundy) N Tinkler 4 9 1
7	510-110	OLD PROVENCE (26) (D) (T J Dayson) R Harrs 6 9 0
8	/31060	JERMYN STREET (USA) (364) (John Bray) Mrs J Cecil 5 9 0
8	323	SPEED TO LEAD (177) (Buckgam Oak Holdings) H Cocil 4 9 0
10	210100-	DON'T SHOOT FAIRLES (191) (D) (Mrs Cela Miler) C Britain 4 8 12
11	60-6243	PROGRESSION (34) (D) (Aks Gome) C Murray 5 8 12 M Belind (5) 1.3
12	422410-	MEGREDOOT (167) (D) (CSGI Racing Syndrotte) H Collegetge 4 8 9
13	4111-23	OPERA BUFF (92) (D) (B Tregutha) Miss Gay Kelengy 5.89
14	03310-	FAHS (USA) (332) (D) (Chy Industrial Surples Ltd) R Alighuet 4 8 3
15	041-312	BEAUMONT (70) (D) (BF) (P Currengtom) J Barles 8 7 10 G Bardwell 12
16	300014-	SALTANDO (188) (Mrs Sandy Hemogel Par Mechel 5 7 10 N Variety (3) 9

Minimum weight: 7st 10th, Youe handloop weights: Beaumont 7st 9th, Sa BETTRIG: 4-1 Speed To Lead, 6-1 Falsa, 8-1 Opera Buff, 10-1 Ben

1995: Parthan Spongs 4 10 0 L Detton 3-1 (J Gosden) 20ran

FORM QUIDE

SPEED TO LEAD ran well against her better class stablemate Al Widyon at Leicester in October and also against Tirashaan at Yermouth so might just have got in here light off a rating of 76. Pales is interesting on his first run for Reg Alechurst since a madden van over today's trip at Tramore for Kewn Prendergast. Megdinot have the tripe to win handicaps this season. Beaton in the mud at Musselburgh at the beckend, she is best judged on her Goodwood win from Snowy Petrel. Beatfleet goes well for Frankle Detron and was in good form early lest season. Don't Shoot Fairlies was a three-times winner last term and Progression will like the ground after his Goodwood and York wine last season (tramed then by Pat Hasiam) and he's sharp from the all-weather.

Selection: SPEED TO LEAD

4.45 NGK SPARK PLUGS BARTLOW MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2YO filies 5f Penalty Value £4,113 CARMINE LATE (R E Songsen P Chepin-Hyam 8 11... DAME FAURA (A) Monson) P Cole 81... DOWNY (11) Scheudey Park Study R Hannon 8 11... SILCA KEY SLCA (Admidge Racing Lunder) M Charmon SILLA KEY SLCA (Admidge Racing Lunder) M Charmon SIMPLY TRAMES (USA) (Times of Wagan) W O'Gorrem 8 1 WOODERINE (USA) (Luciano Gaucci M Ball 8 11....

BETTING: 9-4 Carmine Lake, 11-4 Downy, T-2 Dame Laura, 4-1 Wooderine, 7-1 Silca Ney Silca 12-1 Simply Times 1995: Incordica 2 8 11 M J Kinane 3-1 (D R Loder) 11 ran

FORM GUIDE

Dowry's debut form at Kempton was boosted when Masterstrake (third) won at Brighton and she is bound to improve efter running green. But Michael Bell's WOODERINE could be the one- the Woodman filly being a half-sater to Italian Guineas winner Ancestral Dancer, Cambine Lake is by the speciater Royal Academy our of a mare who won over six furlarge as a juverile. Desire Lawra, another deughter of Royal Academy, is more stoutly bred on the dant's order, while Mick Charmon has reported that Silea Key Silea may be better for this production, Simply Times has a pacey pedigree and from the stable that had an early juvenile winner here last year in Foreman.

Selection: WOODERINE

5.20	WOOD DITTON STAKES (CLASS D) £7,000 a Penalty Value £5,800	added 3YO 1m
1	ALZEUS DA'S 8 Sumner) C Horgen 90	Paol Eddery 1
2	AMFORTAS (B H Voat) C Britan 9 0	B Dovie 5
3	AREED AL OLA (USA) (Sheikh Ahmed Al Maksoum) A Stewart 9 0	M J Klusne 17
4	CHABROL (CAN) (L. Marrigopoulos) H Certi 8 O	W Rvan 16
5	CHARRON, (CUA) (I. Narropoulos) H Cacil 8 0	A Mockey 14
8	FARASAN (Preco A A Fessel) H Cost 9 0	McGlone 28
7	GULLIVER (K Andulta) B HPs 9 0	Pat Eddery 4
8	HARREB (USA) (Zlad A Galadari) J Her; 9 0	Weeper 15
8 9	HISMAGICMOMENT (USA) (M Tabor) P Chapple-Hyem 9 0	Rold 9
10	MANALOJ (USA) (Hamdari Al Maktourn) P Wateryn 9 0	R HIRS 3
11	MASTER BOORS #This Reiched IT Loder 9.0	D Husthau 19
11 12	MEUBARCHIN (USA) (Hamdon Al Maktoum) J Dunion 9 0	
13	MUZU (Sheith Mohammad) 8 Hills 8 D	M Fills 10
14	SHARRUR (USA) (Hamden Al Moktoum) A Stewart 80	D Harrison 21
15	SHANDOU (USA) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 9 O	L Dettori 2
16	SHAVINSKY (Mrs. J. M. Man) P. Howing 8.0	R Cochrage T
17	SLIEVENAMON (P Currimgram) J Banks 9 0	J Online 20
18	YOM JAMEEL (Sheikh Ahmed Al Maktoum) M Stoute 9 0	K Brackhaw 12
19	LEPTICHA (USA) (R E SONISTEN 8 HMs 8 8	B Thomson 11
20	ROBUSTA (The Duchess of Rorburghe) A Stewart 8 9	S Whitworth 6
21	WHITEWATER AFFAIR (I M Greetham) M Stoute 8 9	T Quins 8

BETTRIG: 4-1 Shanton, 5-1 Gullver, 6-1 Chebrol, 7-1 Fereson, Hamagica 1995: Solor Flight 3 9 0 Pat Eddery 13-2 (B W Huls) 10 ran FORM GUIDE

he's a son of silver Hawk out of an unraced mairs and a full-brother to the top-class American cott Dancal. John Gosden uns the nicely-bred Sibastiou, an Alleged cott out of Oh So Sharp's daughter, Shama, who stayed further after winning over today's trip as a juvenile. Henry Coch's last numer in this, Opera Score, managed only bount to Amport, but he went on to win the Predomanus Stakes at Goodwood the following morth: It goes without saying that he must hold CHABROL in right esteem, the colt being a son of El Gran Senor out of a well-reloted mare. Barry Hills has stated that Garilliver will come on for the run and, being a son of Rambow Quest, the colt would appreciate out in the ground. Hillsangiglicinoment has both pace and stamina in his pedigree, while David Loder's Riastor Boots is a Waming out of a dam who also won at this distance. Michael Stoute's Natchavellian tilly Whitowater Affair is out of a winning dam at this timp, while others to take the eye are Amfartas and Baaralioj, the latter being out of a half-sister to Northern Dancer.

Sefection: CHABROL

PONTEFRACE

2.45 Wait For Rosle 3.20 Sondos (nb) 3.50 Axford 4.25 Pine Essence 5.00 Tastiya 5.30 Dana Point 6.00

IRAW ADVANTANCE: Low manuscribes described in the Left-hand, undulating course.

Left-hand, undulating course.

Bacecourse is a mile north west of town on AKSS. Postefract. (Monkhill) rail station (regular service from Leeds and Wakefield) is over a mile away. Tanshelf rail station (service from Wakefield) adjoins course. AD-MISSION: Club 512; Paddock 53; Silver Ring 53,60. CAR PARE: Third.

MISSION: Club 512; Paddock 53; Silver Ring 53,60. CAR PARE: Third. Ring, car with four occupants, \$5, plus \$2 at turnst

MINKERED FOR THE FIRST TIME: Absolute Ruler (4.25), Outbury

(5.30). WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DATS: None. LONG-DESTANCE RUNNERS: Raffles Booster (6.00) sent 264 miles by A Newcombe from Huntshaw, Devon. 2.45 MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS E) £4,200 added 270 5f 55 CLASSIC PARTYBOER (L1) M W Esserby 9 0 -4 FAN OF VENT-ADA (25) C Allen 8 0 -4 FOOT BATTALION (20) R Hollischaed 9 0 -FOR OLD TAMES SAME J Beny 9 0 -0 HIGHLAND PASS (28) M McCormeck 9 0 -

107 403000 Externate breach (s) in the first of the month ___C Hodgson 1 ___F Lynch (5) 2 ____J Carrol 10

62 MERVOUS KEX (15) W Mar 9 0Jean-Merre Lopez 6	3.50 LADY BALK MAIDEN S
4 OUR FUTURE (6) M Johnston 9 OT Williams 4	I) £4,400 added 1m 2
PANDICULATION E Weymes 80	1 0- ELECTION DAY (252) M Strute 4
32 SWIND (13) (BP) P Evens 90 K Fellon T	2 040- HUGWITY (271) 8 Hanbury 4 9 13
23 HELLO DOLLY (9) K Nory 8 9C Scally (7) 12	3 6-0 NORDASK LEGEND (7) Mrs O That
2 WAIT FOR ROSE (8) M Chennon 89K Darley 11	4 63- SOUTH SEA BUBBLE (174) L Cur
12 declared -	5 226- AXFORD (USA) (215) P Chapple-H
NG: 9-2 Nervous Rnz, 6-1 Fan Of Vent-Jode, For Old Times Salon,	6 O- ELASHATH (USA) (188) J Gosden
reton, T-1 Foot Buttaline, 8-1 Classic Partygour, 10-1 others	7 OO- FLOCHECK (USA) (LT4) J Dunlop
	8 0-5 NEEDLE MATCH (15) C Wall 38 1 8 00- CAPSTONE (175) W James 385.
RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS D)	10 4 KATHRYN'S PET (20) Alis M Revel
RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS D) 57,000 added 3YO filles 6F	11 O- LIBERGERICE (FR) (177) E Dunico
	12 34 SWEETNESS HERSELF (197) M F
3342-0 WHITTLE ROCK (13) E Alston 9 7	- 12 declared
01430- MESS WATERLINE (203) (D) P Surus 9 4 Flayley Williams (7) 16	BETTANO: 3-1 Axford, 6-1 South See Bubble, 6-1
0.0636 GAGAJULU (42) P Bers 9 1T hos 15	ness Herself, Kulbryn's Pet, Needle Match, 16
2430-1 SPUCOVA (15) W Hogges 8 13 K Fallon 8	
63501- ROYAL CENSON (188) Dame Smith 8 12	A OF OSSETT SELLING H
61035- ANTONIAS MELODY (166) (D) 8 Bowing 8 12 C Tengue (5) 14	4.25 OSSETT SELLING H.
34-1 \$0HDOS (15) (D) J HGs 8 10	1. 40-4365 NIGHT TIME (47) A Streets 4 10 (
2010-4 SWEET NATURE (15) (D) W Janes 8 7	2 1-30420 TOTAL BACH (15) (D) R Ingam 4
3150-0 PHARAOM'S JOY (1.6) (0) J Payne 6.5 M Tebbet 11 24-1 CHARLENG SHIDE (62) S Willems 8.5 X Darley 3	3 50-0 FRAMED (21) S Williams 699
20000- GLADYS ALTHORPE (185) (D) J Syn 8 2	4 240435 HAWAKAM (61) (D) E Alston 1098
363.60 MAY DUSEN NEGAN (15) Mrs A Kne 7 12	5 5000- MY BRAVE BIRL (203) 8 Richmon

12	1 5N	CADI BALLA MINIDEN STAVES (CEASS D) (DI
~		I) £4,400 added 1m 2f 6yds
1		ELECTION DAY (252) M Struce 4 9 13 K Davley 1
2	040-	HUGWITY (271) 8 Hanbury 4 9 13
3	6-0	NORDESK LEGEND (7) Mas O Thomson 4 9 13
4		SOUTH SEA BUBBLE (174) L Cuman 4 9 8 O Urbina 11
5	226-	AXFORD (USA) (215) P Chapple-Hyam 38 10
6		ELASHATH (USA) (188) J Gosden 3 8 10 Carroll 12
7		FLOCHECK (USA) (174) J Dunito 3 8 10T Sprake 4
8		NEEDLE MATCH (15) C Wall 38 10
Š		CAPSTONE (175) W Jame 3 85
10		KATHRYN'S PET (20) Mis M Reveloy 385 K Darley 10
11	0-	LIBERKERICE (FR) (177) E Dunion 385K Pallon 6
12	34-	SWEETNESS HERSELF (197) M Ryon 3 85
	•	- 12 declared -
.'2	TNR: 3-1/	inford, 6-1 South See Bubble, 6-1 Election Day, 8-1 Hughity, Sweet
		Kalbrur's Pet, Naedle Match, 10-1 others

4.25 OSSETT SELLING HANDICAP (CLAS £3,000 added 1m 4yds 1 40.4365 NGHT TIME (47) A Sheeter 4 10 0	tee (5) R
2 1.30420 TOTAL BACH (15) (D) R logam 4 9 10	
2 1.30420 TOTAL BACH (15) (D) R logam 4 9 10	
3 50-0 FRAMED (21) S Williams 699	50se 15
4 240435 HAWAWAM (61) (D) E Alston 1098S D Wil 5 5000- MY MRAVE 686L (203) 8 Retirment 497 J C 6 3026-00 SELF EXPRESSION (8) (D) (NP) Mr. J Ramedon 897 J	Declay 6
5 5000- MY MRANE BIRL (203) 8 Rehmand 4 9 7 C 6 3026-00 SELF EXPRESSION (8) (0) (8) Ms J Ramsten 8 9 7 J	
6 3026-00 SELF EXPRESSION (8) (D) (DF) Mrs.J.Ramssian 89 7	
7 00550-0 JUST FLAMENCO (75) (C) M Ryan 6 9 6	
8 6-41613 PRIE ESSENCE (USA) (15) (C) (D) J Eyre 696	
9 4/0-0440 TIMELY EXAMPLE (USA) (47) 8 Combides 5 9 5	
10 4500-00 TANDRIDGE (19) J Jerkins 49 1	
11 25000-0 BATTLE COLOURS (16) (0) Don Einesa 78 13 16m T	
12 4441-02 HOEPROS (13) (D) R Hodges 6 8 13	
13 00400-0 RETA COCEA /130 Mestro Mestro 48 13	60 10

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_	15	000-0	APPEAL AG	AN CLO	Vers J Remode	n 38 11	Dear
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T 2						811A	
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8						Sevan 4 8 10	
1						8 10	
5					O declared -		
1 5 2 4	BET	TRO: T-2 N	beemb 12-			inciper Quest,	13-2 Be
4	7.1	Middle Ton	o. Annual A	tale R.1	However, 1	1.1 others	
			al sales in				
6							
0		00	WEFT (GATE	LIMITED	STAKES	(CL
6	100	1	£5.100	added	3YO 1m	STAKES 4vds	•
3							
	1	1-	ARABKAN 5	TURT (27:	S rosa Hruma	gdon 8 11	

_		
1	1-	ARABIAN STORY (272) Lord Huntington 8 11T Ives
2	6354	CHEERFUR ASPECT (187) E Dunico 6 11
3	21300-	FLYING MORTH (188) Als M Reveley 8 11
4	10640-0	TOO HASTY (9) T Easterby 8 11M Birch
5		LOVELY PROSPECT (187) R Guest 88 Carroll
6		TASLINA (USA) (170) J Duniop 8 8K Duniop
7		THREESOME (USA) (204) L Currens 8 8
RE	TTMD: 5.2	Threesome, 4-1 Cheerful Aspect, 9-2 Lovely Prospect, 5-1 Fly
		Arabian Story, 6-1 Tasing, 12-1 Too Hasty
1	5.30	GARFORTH HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,20

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CHELTENHAM
HYPERION 2.20 Air Shot 2.55 Headwind 3.30 Holland House 4.00 Needwood Muppet 4.35 Spree Cross 5.10 Valley Garden
GOING: Good to Soft.

Racecourse is I in N of town off A435. Bus link from Cheken station (served by Bristol, Birmingham and London, Paddington) 2m away.

ADMISSION: Club & Tattersalls combined £12 (juniors, 16-24 years, £8); Foster's Enclosure Sh. CAR PARK: Pree.

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CHELTENHAM

Even by the impoverished standards of sports administrators, the RFU's botched attempts to oversee the move to professionalism have set new standards for incompetence, argues Steve Bale

Rugby union: how not to run a sport

given up wondering what the next day will bring. Last year he actually felt modestly pleased with himself when he was appointed to succeed Dudley Wood, secretary of the Rugby Football Union, and it has been all downhill since then. At one and the same time English rugby has landed itself in internecine turmoil and the international doghouse. As an exercise in incompc-

tence, in how not to run a sport. England's reluctant attempt to come to terms with the start of professionalism, and with it the end of 120 years of history, would take some beat-ing. These days Hallett, the most affable of fellows, is going round with a permanently haunted look, assailed inside and outside the RFU, inside and outside England.

'The RFU is at the least guilty of hubris in holding such a hostage to fortune'

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If he now wished he had stayed in the Navy, he could be forgiven, since nothing he ever saw in the service could bave prepared him for the ferocious politicisation of rugby that has accompanied professionalism. However it has done so, the RFU has succeeded in antagonising everyone.

Not content with the seismic internal split which may he about to lose it its most eminent clubs, it has now so antagonised the other home unions - which, let's face it, congenitally despise the English anyway - that it may he about to be kicked out of the

Five Nations Championship. Yesterday the Welsh, Irish and Scots together announced they would reconsider the format of the championship - with the plain intention of finding a way of expelling the perfidious English for their hrazen attempt to corner the lion's share



Ancient history? Steve Williams, of Wales, falls to stop England's Rory Underwood in the Five Nations' Championship, next year he may not have to try

Photograph: Empics

Lion's share? The Lions may be among the first victims.

Anyone who imagines this to be no more than a cross-border tiff about admittedly large sums of money - anything from £130m to £225m has been bandied about as the overall going rate - has a poor knowledge not only of rugby history but of history itself. Jack Rowell, the England manager, is fond of talking about the history that goes into Five Nations matches and when he does so he means Culloden and not the

So the idea of putting the in-effably superior English in their place is older by a few centuries than rugby. But even within the specifically rugby context the RFU, by demanding a rise from 25 to 60 per cent of the proceeds from the joint home unions' television contract and then claiming everyone will be better off, is at the very least guilty of hubris in holding such a hostage to fortune.

To understand we need to go back to 1884 when a dispute between England and Scotland led International Board as an arhitrator - without the RFU, which would not join on the basis of equal representation with Wales, Scotland and Ireland, It did not do so until 1890 when finally offered six members against two each for the other

The resentment, for this and other perceived indignities. lingers. In 1911 England voluntarily gave up two seats but it was 1948, when Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were graciously admitted with

lish representation came down to that of their neighbours. France, by the way, bad to wait

It might have been thought that with a war on one front against its big clubs - the last thing the RFU needed was to open a second front, though in fact the row over TV money was beralded two years ago when the RFU started negotiations in similar vein but eventually backed down under precisely the threat that yesterday be-

It is also curious, even at a

time when the need to pay for Twickenham makes it desperate to grub up all the money it can

er home unions at the same time as telling the clubs of the folly of going it alone from the RFU. Something here does not add up. As for its local difficulties, it is totally bemusing that a body that at one time was known as the most decisive, businesslike and far-seeing in Europe should bave turned itself into such an object of derision. To complain

caught on the hop by the In-ternational Board's decision last August to abandon amateurism is a tired explanation

and certainly not an excuse.

Let us look no further than the other side of the world. Whether or not the IB had permitted professionalism, the Wallabies, All Blacks and Springboks as well as the provincial structure underpin-ning them would have gone pro anyway, so when the IB made its fateful decision all of the above were immediately up, and in the case of the players

The result has been the dazzling Super 12-series, a Jaguar among competitions compared with the jaiopy that passes for its nearest English equivalent. The clubs who are at logger-heads with the RFU may appear to want to do something about that, but sometimes you feel the mass membership of the union would like nothing better than to rid themselves of these same clubs and so of the awful taint of professionalism.

in the modern, multinational rugby world this is an utterly untenable position hut in English rugby it would provide an explanation of sorts for the obstructiveness of which Cliff Brittle stands accused in his role as chairman of the RFU executive. One member of that executive has seriously suggested

'Rugby union's amateurs are making an unholy mess of professionalism'

to me that there is a hidden agenda to oust the major clubs as a precisely similar purification exercise to that which entailed the departure of the northern clubs 101 years ago.

Whatever, it is no way to run a business - which is how the RFU and the top clubs are nowadays ohliged to regard themselves. Hence the reason the clubs want more cash from the union and the union wants more cash from the home unions. The trouble is that the RFU is, to its very bootstraps, amateur; you had only to be at the two special general meetings in Birmingham to know this for certain.

Try translating that to the administration of a professional sport – and the Rugby Football Union is doing precisely that – and you are instantly in diffi-culty. However you look at it, rughy union's amateurs are making an unholy mess of

essons that have not been learnt as history repeats itself

If long-term consistency is the sporting virtue to be prized above all others, then the Rugby Football Union has it in trumps.

If Will Carling's old farts are showing an inability now to deal with the reality of change, then they have a 101-year-old precedent for their recalcitrance. The threatened schism between the RFU and its leading clubs carries uncanny echoes of the events that led to the birth of rugby league in 1895. The myth that rugby league

came into being purely because of the single issue of hroken-time payments to compensate working-class players has been largely debunked by recent research. The hroader picture of the

split of 1895 is one of a desire among the more successful clubs, who were concentrated in the north of England, for more autonomy. Those clubs were already paying their players through hack-door arrangements and recognised that they needed regular competition against each other to generate the income that was required.

The RFU's attitude to hroken-time payments was merely a symptom of its determination to maintain its control

and not allow the initiative for deciding the future shape of the game to be seized by northerners, who were not imbued

with the amateur ethos. All the things that the rebel clubs wanted before the 1895 split, notably leagues and the abandonment of restrictive amateurism, have come to pass in rugby union over the past century. But the refusal to allow the new breed of rebel clubs to exercise autonomy within the RFU can be seen as a rearguard battle in the same war.

Dave Hadfield believes that the Rugby Football Union's present intransigence is bred of the same kind of autocracy which split the game more than a century ago

different organisations that professional clubs will bave to become, while the clubs know that it is hopelessly ill-equipped

In the lead-up to the 1895 schism, there was deep concern over the wealthier, less scrupulous chibs poaching all the best talent, just as there has been in

retain its power over the very different organisations that pro-RFU as incompetent and run by establishment hackwoodsmen.

There was even a figure who could he regarded as the Cliff Brittle of his day, the Rev Frank Marshall, who took on the role of witchfinder-general, rooting out incipient professionalism. It was the intransigence of his faction that led to 22 clubs setting up their own Northern Union. Some of the consequences of that move should give the RFU pause for thought now.

et, for the RFU make a virtue

of going it alone from the oth-

- as many have - that it was

Rugby union in the north of England never recovered from the shock to its system, and association football, which had resolved the tensions between amateurism and professionalism, stepped into the vacuum.

The hreakaway league became a largely self-contained, exclusive body, because smaller clubs could not compete financially with the higger outfits which had taken the plunge.

Over the next decade, the rules under which the Northern Union played adopted most of the distinguishing features of rugby league, starting with reducing teams to 13, abolishing line-outs and allowing open professionalism.

The reason for the changes in the way the game was played was simple. The new game was dependent on attracting crowds in order to pay its way, and it had to be more attractive to waich if it was to survive.

What rules, you have to wonder, will professional rugby union clubs eventually play

under? If they are to generate the money they need, they will find, as another group of men who hridled under the RFU's autocracy 101 years ago found. that it will have to be worth

What do you trink of the RFU's handling of the RFU's handling of the move to professionalism? We will print a selection of your views. Write to Sports Letters, Sports Department, The Independent, 1, Carada Square, Canary What, London E14 59L. Or fax your letter to 0171 293 2894

Nickle cleared for final

Rugby League DAVE HADFIELD

Sonny Nickle, the Bradford Bulls forward, has been cleared to face his old club, St Helens. in the Challenge Cup final in 10 days' time.

Nickle has been ruled to have no case to answer after being placed on report following an incident in the Super League match between the two clubs on Sunday. That leaves Brian Smith, the Bulls' coach, able to field his first-choice second row combination at Wembley, with Jeremy Donougher expected to recover from a neck injuty in time to play.

St Helens, on the other hand,

have some worries in their back

row. Vila Matautia, faces the disciplinary committee tomorrow as a result of his sending-off for the use of an elbow against Bradford. Dean Busby, the firstchoice loose forward, was ruled out yesterday because he has not recovered from a knee injury

The better news from Knowslev Road is that Simon Booth, the second row, could be fit to resume in time for the final. St Helens will also have Mike Gregory, the former Great Britain loose forward and cap-

quickly enough.

tain, on hand on the hig day. Gregory was appointed as-sistant coach to Shaun McRae last month, but Salford were refusing to release him from his playing contract. Now they have relented in time for Gregory to

he involved behind the scenes in the Wembley preparations. "It's a great time to arrive at the club and I have to thank John Wilkinson, the chairman at Salford, for releasing me from

The RFU has accepted pro-

fessionalism, hut still wants to

my contract," Gregory said. Mike Ford, the former Great Britain scrum-half, will make his dehut for Wakefield in the home match against Salford on Sunday after joining the cluh from Warrington. The 30-year-old former Wigan and Castleford player has agreed a two-year deal with the option of a further 12 months.

Wakefield have paid a small transfer fee for Ford, who joined Warrington last September after a spell with the South Queensland Crushers in

Typical Examples:

Archer joins Newcastle Ainslie collects bronze as Hall keeps spending

Rugby Union STEVE BALE

The spending spree by Sir John Hall on behalf of the rugby arm of Newcastle United Sporting Club continued yesterday when three players, headed by the 21year-old England lock Garath Archer, were added to Rob

Andrew's squad.

Archer's return to Newcastle from Bristol had been well trailed, and both clubs appear to be satisfied - Newcastle to have an outstanding young forward and Bristol to be rid of a profoundly unsettling influence on the rest of their players.

He will he joined by the

England A centre Andrew

Blyth, one of an impending exodus of players from West Hartlepool, and Ross Nesdale. a hooker who was on the Auckland bench when the Lions played there in 1993. Although Nesdale is a non-European national, his new club say he will be eligible to play from the start

of next season.

The First Division to which Newcastle aspire will move nearer its denouement tonight when Leicester, two points behind Bath with a game in hand, play Sale at Welford Road. If Sale sensed a better chance of an upset in the absence of John Liley and Rory Underwood the feeling evaporated when their own inspiration, Paul Turner, withdrew with a rib injury.

Sailing STUART ALEXANDER

A hronze medal at the Laser World Championships in Simonstown, South Africa, was almost a disappointment for Ben Ainslie, Britain's representative at the Olympics.

The 19-year old was unable to recover in the final two races yesterday from a disqualification on Monday for putting on a top which meant his weight was

seven ounces over the limit. The gold medal went to Robert Scheidt, of Brazil, and the silver to Karl Suneson, of Sweden, Another Briton, Ian Percy, was pleased to finish fifth, behind Stefan Warkala, of In Murcia, Spain, all the British contenders for the Olympics are doing well enough to go through in the European qualifiers for the women's doublehanded 470, the women's singlehanded Europe, and the men's singlehanded Finn.

After six races Bethan Rag-17 with 16 to qualify, Shirley Robertson was ninth of 26 with 19 to qualify, and Richard Stenhouse was 14th of 24 with 18 to qualify.

The Round the Isle of Wight Race, which is expected to attract a record entry of more than 1,500 yachts for its dia-mond jubilee on 29 June, is to he sponsored for the next three years by the Japanese-owned opthalmics company Hoya Lens UK, who will also back Eddie Warden Owen's 1996 campaign on the Ultra 30 circuit.

Britain's Sue Crafer is one of five women named as the initial core crew of Sweden's allwomen EF Education entry in the 1997 Whithread Race. The training boat joins the other gatt and Sue Carr were 10th of training yacht, the former Galicia Pescanova, in Falmouth at the end of this month. Two new yachts are scheduled to be huilt.

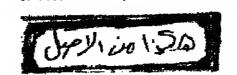
Crafer joins Whitbread vet-erans Mikaela von Koskull of Finland, Leah Newbold of New Zealand, and Marleen Cleyndert of the Netherlands, all of whom crewed Heineken in the last Whithread. A Swedish icehreaker was yesterday accompanying the yacht out of



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Contenders briefed on title play-off

Phil Shaw previews tonight's two games which affect the race for the Premiership

chester United away strip, the destination of the Premiership trophy is a grey area again. The top two are at home to lowly op-position tonight, yet now face the added pressure of needing to pile on the goals.

On the eve of United's game against Leeds - in which Gary Pallister is set to make a longawaited comeback - Alex Fer-guson played do the idea that they might be forced to play off for the championship with Newcastle, who face Southampton. "It won't come to that," he said, "but we do know that goals are very important."

Despite Ferguson's confidence, FA Premier League officials will discuss the matter with the clubs tomorrow. The rules provide for a play-off if two clubs finish level on points, goal difference and goals scored. Newcastle are two goals behind the leaders but, as things stand today, they would be level on all three counts if they won their game in hand 2-0.

Agreeing a date for such a match could be awkward. United meet Liverpool in the FA Cup final on 11 May, with the following Thursday set aside for a replay. Two days later, England play Hungary at Wembley, and within 48 hours Terry Venables takes his squad on a Far Eastern tour to prepare for the European Championship

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Date: Some

By tomorrow, of course, the situation may have altered radically. United look to have the less arduous task. Southampton, striving for points to avoid relegation, tackle Newcastle buoyed by the 3-1 rout of United. Leeds, already past the 40-point safety mark, have been playing as if mentally they are already on the beach.

Ferguson put it succinctly: we're confident about in terms of trying their best. It's either could break Newcastle - and

Like the newly binned Man- that he thrives on appreciation - he added: "He was superb against us. He's got tremendous

talent and scoring ability."
On paper, United should have little trouble heating Leeds, whose defensive problems have deepened with each defeat. But it might be a dif-ferent story if Howard Wilkinson sets out to stop the home side playing. The Lecds manager paved the way for a night massed defence by confirming that Tomas Brolin, who reportedly intends to exercise his escape" clause in the summer, would not be considered.

"I spoke to Tomas about his future and he told me he hadn't made his mind up yet," Wilkinson said. "I don't think we can go to Old Trafford unless we have everyone 100 per cent committed. There will be 50,000 people there and Manchester United will have the bit between their teeth."

Tony Yeboah, who injured a knee playing for Ghana a few days after the Coca-Cola Cup final, faces a fitness test. Meanwhile, Pallister will inform his manager as to whether his back has suffered any reaction to five days' intensive training. Ferguson, asked whether Leeds' preponderance of six-footers made him keener to have the England defender back, said: "No. It's because he's the best centre-half in the country."

Before the weekend's results threw the title race open again, Kevin Keegan welcomed the game's newest manager, John Aldridge, to "the Grey Hair Club". Anything but three points tonight and Keegan might turn as white as Manchester United's next away kit.

Faustino Asprilla (ankle) and Les Ferdinand (virus) should play as Newcastle seek to avenge their own defeat at The "Southampton are the one club Dell, but John Beresford (excessive lip to manager) may give way to Robbie Elliott. Whatever that or go down." Perhaps mindful that one flash of inspiration from Matthew Le Tissier

the personnel, both main challengers are certain to be as up for this one as Eric Cantona's for this one as Eric Captona's Tranmere player-manager, has

Scotland wait for Ferguson

The question of whether Duncan Ferguson will be fit for the players on senior and B in-European Championship finals has nagged away almost as long as the injury which has re-stricted him to five caps. Today, Scotland expect their answer, writes Phil Shaw.

Ferguson will undergo spe-cialist examination on his persistent groin problem. Craig Brown, who named Everton's high-rise striker yesterday in the Scotland squad to piny Denmark a week tonight, said the diagnosis would be "critical" for his prospects.

"We want to know if he needs an operation or just a rest cure," the Scotland manager said. "If it's major surgery that would rule him out of the finals. If it's scar tissue, he might just have a chance."

A sizeable number of the 41 ternational duty against the European champions will be forwards, reflecting the fact that injuries have prevented Brown establishing a partnership. Scott Booth, first-choice during qualifying, is to continue his reha-hilitation in Tuesday's B match. hilitation in Intesoury's 5 match-scottanto squad to beneatik, Copen-hagen, 24 Aprilp: Boyd (Celtic), Burley (Cricked), Calderwood (Tottenham), Collica-Cestof, Foguson (Evertor), Gallecher (Bioch-burn), Gentralii (Nottin Forest), Gorana (Ranges), Guna (Nowlor), Hondry (Bedisum), Jackson (Hibertian), Leighton (Hibertian), McAllister (Leeds), McColl (Ranges) McColat (Ranges), McKlimiel (Aberticen), McLarens (Fargess), McSimy (Calth, Spacet (Chicken), Scottanto B Soulad for Denmark (Chicken) Genges), McStay (Csitc), Spencer (Chokses SCOTLAND B SOQUAD to Democrit, Hykobia Palsace, 23 Aprill: Beach (Abordeel), Casaero (Horta), Durke (Rangers), Glass (Aberden Horse (McKohawell), Loss (Coverny), Jambe Motherwell, Horsinali (Pasero), Hartin (Mot erwell), McKistay (Bohon, McKohamo (Mod erwell), McKistay (Bohon, McKohamo (Mod erwell), McKistay (Bohon, McKohamo (Mod erwell), McKistay (Bohon, McKohamo (Mot erwell), McKistay (Bohon, McKohamo (Mod (Cesta), Stamme (Aberden), Walker (Particl Watt (Aberdeon), Whyte (McKelsbrough).



Hands-on experience: The Finnish striker Jarl Litmanen hears words of wisdom from the Ajax coach, Louis van Gaal

Republic call for Moore and Fleming

The uncapped Middlesbrough midfielder Alan Moore and the full-back Curtis Fleming have been drafted into the Republic of Ireland squad for next week's friendly match against the Czech Republic in Prague.

They replace Norwich's Kei-th O'Neill, who has a ligament injury, and the Chelsea full-back Terry Phelan, who has still not recovered from a thigh muscle injury picked up in the FA Cup semi-final against Manchester United. John Aldridge, the new also withdrawn from the Republic's squad.

"I wasn't going to start John in this match because I want to try a few new options," Mick McCarthy, the Republic's manager, said. "I understand John's position - he has a few big games left this season and Tranmere

are still in the danger zone." Northern Ireland's manager, Bryan Hamilton, has called up the Walsall goalkeeper Trevor Wood for the friendly match with Sweden in Belfast next week after Nottingham Forest's Alan Fettis pulled out

with a thumb injury.

Italy's coach, Arrigo Sacchi. has signed a new contract to take the national team to the 1998 World Cup finals in France, assuming they perform well under his guidance at this summer's European Championship. Sacchi, previously coach of Milan, took over as national coach in 1990 and led Italy to the final of the 1994 World Cup.

Ajax hope to turn the tables

Higuita drops himself for Colombia

he was playing at a low level and sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport

ing Real Madrid. Italy's largest Berlusconi, the television

Louis van Gaal, the Ajax coach, is hoping the renowned passion of Greek supporters will work against Panathinaikos in today's European Cup semi-final second leg in Athens.

The injury-hit holders, who will be without striker Patrick Kluivert, have an uphill task after losing the first leg 1-0, and van Gaal thinks his team have only "a 30 fans consider Panathinaikos play-ers as heroes after their win in Amsterdam [in the first leg]. They want them to reach the final at any cost and this will make them very nervous. We must take advantage of any mistakes."

Some 80,000 fans are expected at Athens' Olympic stadium as Panathinaikos seek a place in the European Cup fi-

The flamboyant goalkeeper

Rene Higuita has withdrawn

himself from selection for

Colombia following a series of

right," Higuita said. "I'm still not

up to the necessary level to as-

sume the responsibility of play-ing on the national side."

football federation, Alvaro

Fina, said be had accepted Hi-

guita's decision with regret but

without any doubt that the 29-

year-old was acting in what he

believed to be the best interest

"He told us very honestly that

"I'm not well, I don't feel

The head of the Colombian

disappointing displays.

nal for the first time in since 1971, when they were beaten 2-0 by Ajax at Wembley. Panathinaikos, back on top of

the Greek league after a 1-0 Athens derby win over AEK, are confident but do not underestimate their task in earning a tilt at either Nantes or Juventus. Their Argentinian coach, Juan Ramon Rocha, per cent chance of getting said: "I want all Greeks to help through". But he added: "Greek us. It will not be easy to reach us. It will not be easy to reach the final because Ajax will attack like hungry wolves from the first minute.

advantage hut anything can happen. I said before the first leg that Ajax is the best team in the world and we respect them. winners' Cup' and Lyon re-But the respect ends when the moving Lazio from the Uefa

didn't feel as if be were in

Fina said. "We have to believe in Higuita's sincerity and we have to keep moving forward."

Higuita became known for

his eccentric playing style, in-

cluding his amazing "scorpion-kick" save against England at

Wemhley earlier this season. Fabio Capello, the Milan

coach who is close to his his

fourth Italian league title in five

years, may leave the club at the

According to published re-ports, Capello is close to join-

end of the season

shape to be on the selection,"

Mucb of Panathinaikos'

hopes in front of goal will again depend on the mercurial Polish international striker Krzysztof Warzycha, who scored in Amsterdam, his sixth goal in the European campaign.

Nantes will be seeking inspiration from Bordeaux as they attempt to overcome a two-goal deficit against Juventus. Few gave Bordeaux much hope of beating Milan in the Uefa Cup quarter-finals after losing the first leg 2-0, but they produced a stunning 3-0 victory. French teams have thrown

against Italian sides this season. with Paris St-Germain beating Parma in the European Cup-

Cup. Nantes, who have never

said that a three-year contract.

giving Capello four billion lire (£1.7m) a year, would be signed

Gazzetta quoted Real

Madrid's president Lorenzo

Sanz as saying "Capello will be the next coach of Real Madrid."

Capello said recentiv he will de-

the title by winning at Torino as long as Juventus, who trail Mi-

lan by nine points, fail to beat

Elections in Italy on Sunday

will decide whether Silvio

Internazionale in Milan.

On Saturday Milan can clinch

cide his future on Monday.

early next week.

reached a European final, know they have a tall order against Juventus, even if the Italians did lose 3-0 at home to Sampdoria on Saturday.

Juventus, European champions in 1985 and losing finalists in 1973 and 1983, have their French midfielder Didier Deschamps back from suspension to play at Nantes' Beaujoire stadium, where he started his career in Nantes.

Marcello Lippi, the Juventus coach, sounded only mildly confident of the outcome. "I would "The first leg win gives us an away their traditional complex rather be in our position than that of Aiax. But the tie is not over, especially as Nantes will have two important players back in N'Doram and Makelcle." In fact, the Chad midfielder

Japhet N'Doram faces a fitness

succeeded in his attempt to re-

gain the premier office as leader of a centre-right coali-

A victory for Berlusconi

would result in a renewal of the

popular high-spending policy of

the Milan club. This would also

include a new contract for

Capello, who took over at Milan from Arrigo Sacchi in 1991, when the latter became

national team coach, has been

in conflict with the club recently

after he was offered a one-year

extension of his contract pro-

vided be won the title first.

Capello.

Sampras confirms return to Queen's

Tennis JOHN ROBERTS

Pete Sampras, newly restored as the world No 1, confirmed yesterday that he would defend the

Stella Artois title at Queen's

Club, London, from 10 to 16

June, in preparation for his at-tempt to win a fourth consecuove Wimbledon championship. Sampras is to be joined by five former winners of the \$700,000 (£470,000) Queen's tournament: Boris Becker, Stefan Edberg, Michael Stich, Wayne Ferreira and Todd Martin.

Edberg, a frequent visitor to the practice courts at Queen's, which is within walking distance of his Kensington home, will be making a farewell appearance at the tournament as part of his retirement season.

Thomas Muster will be making his debut. The Austrian, who was supplanted as No 1 by Sampras on Monday, rose to the top of the game without winning an ATP Tour match on grass as a senior player, his solitary victory on the surface having been in the Davis Cup in February.

Goran Ivanisevic, twice a Wimbledon finalist, will also feature in the Stella draw, along with two British direct entries, Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman. A wild card has been provided for Jeremy Bates to enable him to make a farewell appearance at the event.

The Direct Line Insurance international women's championship, at Eastbourne from 18 to 22 June, has attracted five of the world's top 11 players, including Conchita Martinez, the 1994 Wimbledon champion, and Chanda Rubin, the runnerup at Devonshire Park last year. This year's event is to be pre-

ceded by a legends tournament, featuring among others Ken Rosewall, Tony Roche and Fred Stolle, to be played on Monday 17 June.

Monica Seles, the Australian Open champion who has been out of the game for three months because of a shoulder injury, has entered a second-tier WTA Tour event in Madrid the week before the French Open which starts on 27 May

Byron Black, the losing finalist in the Indian Open on Sunday, lost 6-3, 6-0 to Richey Reneberg in the first round of the Japan Open yesterday. Black, the No 9 seed, said he still was suffering from jet lag. Rain prevented any play on

the outside courts, and only six matches were played under the retractable roof of the Ariake Colosseum.

TODAY'S NUMBER

9,000

The pounds sterling that will help easy the disappointment of first-round losers at the Embassy World Snooker Championship at Sheffield. The winner will take home £200,000, while a maximum break will pot £147,000.

Johnson is banned for three games

Earvin "Magic" Johnson was suspended for three games and fined £6,600 by the National Basketball Association yesterday for bumping an official during the Los Angeles Lakers' game with the Phoenix Suns on

Johnson said after the 118-114 bome victory over the Suns that the contact with the referee, Scott Foster, was accidental. But yesterday he accepted his punishment.

"I accept the league's fine and suspension and I want all the fans, the media and everyone associated with the Lakers to know that my actions were unprofessional and wrong," a contrite Johnson said.

to all the NBA referees and to the league, and I hope they know, as I do, that the incident was accidental and that I respect their professionalism in what is a very difficult job."

cised his team-mates for irresponsible behaviour, missed last night's game at Dallas and will sit out the games at San Antomo on Thursday and at home against Minnesota on Saturday. He will be eligible to play again in the final game of the regular season, at Portland on Sunday.

NBAL Mistry 110 New Jersey 90; New York 125 Toronto 79; Septile 112 Houston 106: Indiana 90 Cheriotte 27; Sacramento 90 Denver 98; Port-land 121 San Antonio 97.

CENTRAL DIVISION

"I apologise to Scott Foster, Johnson who recently criti-

Badwinton

Brackmainton
ERROPEAN CHAMPIONISHIP (Heroing, Demnanch Men's singles, first round: M Watt (Repof Int) by Pasen (C. Reo) 15-6 15-3: L Lindelof
(Pin) by Pasen (Eng 15-4 15-8; yan Sootsand
(Nett) by P Verwesse (Ben 15-9 15-2; A
Ammopor (Res) by E Throbos (Pin 15-6 15-12; N
Sperre (Nen') by E Throbos (Pin 15-6 15-12; N
Sperre (Nen') by E Throbos (Pin 15-6 15-14; N
Sperre (Nen') by E Throbos (Pin 15-6 15-14; N
15-4; 11 Hall (Eng) by P Jermi (Pin) 15-12 1511 15-10; 11 Poste (Ger) by M Poppor (Bul) 1511 15-10; 11 Poste (Ger) by M Poppor (Bul) 1511 15-6 15-6 15-0; M Bujan (Ger) by P Keedisch (Au)
15-5 15-7; Women's eningles, first round: B
Been-halder (Netti) by M Koutelane (C. Rep) 112 11-2; X Mongan (Wal) by E Nelsen (Re) 1111-1-1; Baurreyer (Sed) by G Smootk (Re) 11-4
11-0.

PACIFIC DIVISION **Seattle.... *[A Lakars... *Portland.... *Phoenix

ENGLISH MEN'S INDOOR CHAMPTONSHEPS (Melton Movebrey) Triples quarter-finels: lo-ymen (A Wyelf) to Bodman (S Lame) 21-20 (of-ter ears) ends: Whiteshights (S Saccey) to Boston (B Hobert) 1.9-12; Stanley (J Lecton) by

Boxing British middleweight champion, Neville Brown, is to get a revenge European to-tie etternpt at italy's Agostino Cardamone this summer. Brown, 30, has been nom-inated by the European Boxing Union to fight Cardamone for the title recently va-cated by fellow Midlander Riche Wood-hall who is concentrating on his World Boxing Council title attempt against Washington's Keith Holmes in June.

Craig White, the England World Cup all-rounder, and Derren Gough, are both included in Yorkshire's side for the firstincluded in Yorkshire's side for the first-class friendly against Lancashire at Old Trafford starting tomorrow. The match has been reduced from four days to three with the old rivals meeting on Mon-day under the new Benson and Hedges Cup regulations. The sides also stage a 40-over game on Sunday when York-shire plan to play their England under-19 seam bowler Matthew Hoggard. Richard Johnson, who missed last win-ter's Test tour of South Africa because of back problems, has been forced to

pull out of this season's first serious fix-ture following a shoulder injury. The Middissex pacemen had been selected for The Rest to play against England A in a four-day match at Chelmsford, start-ing on Saturday. MEST ROUBES SQUAD (First Test v New Zestand, Bridgetown, Berbados, Priday): C A widsh (cgpt), S L Campbell, R G Somuels, B C Lora, P V Simmons, S Cherclerpoul, R I Holder, I C Adests, C O Browne, I Beshop, G E Ambrose, R Dhansaj, P I, Thompson.

South Africa crushed Pakistan by eight wickets in yesterday's Shariah Cup match to maintain their unbeaten record in the tournament and qualify for the final. The South Africans shot out Pakistan for a meagre 188 in just 45 overs and then reached their target with 16.5 overs to spare to claim their third SHARIAH CUP TOURNAMENT (Sherjah, use): Pakistan 188, South Africa 189 for 2 (Alkutson 94ro), South Africa bt Pekistan by 8 wickets.

P W L Pts Runs

Aftics 3 3 1 6 +2.16

3 1 2 2 -0.60

4 1 3 2 -1.15

Equestrianism

Weiton Romance, who was Lucy Thomp-son's winning mount at last year's Eu-ropean Open Championships, has been withdrawn from next morath's Badminton Mitsubahi Three-Day Event because of a minor Injury. The injury should not pre-vent Thompson from riding for the Insh Olympic team in Atlanta.

of the team.

England Under-18's go to Yeovil on Tues-day to play Scotland in the second leg of the European Youth Tournament in-termediary round. England won the first leg 3-0. The winner of this tie will qual-ify with six other intermediary group win-ners for the final stages to be hosted by France from 21 to 31 July. England, whose stuad includes five graduates of by France from 21 to 31 July. England, whose squad includes five gaduates of the FA National School, beart Latvia 2-0 and Sweden 6-2 in earlier rounds.
ENGLAND UNDER-18 SQUAD (European Youth Townsment v Scotlead, Youth, Townsment v Scotlead, Youth, Townsment v Scotlead, Youth, Townsment v Scotlead, Carrier, Farn, Walker July, Fartham (West Harn), Walker Utth, Jackson (Leads), Crewe (Arsena), Oakley (Southumpton), Shephard (Leads), Theopson (Leappon), Shutt (Leads, Clemance (Tomenhem), Barrett (Newcaste), Heather (Sicioster), Branch (Everton), Discree (Coverby).

Coventry, Children's, Grantes (Cetto), Archer (Noting-Scott Arthony (Coltc), Archer (Noting-han Forest), Brahmer (Man Utd), Challe (Ab-edien), Fergeson (Ranges), Gray (Leeds), Kelly (Coltc), McCallade (McChewell), McCandichia (Coltc), McCallade (McChewell), McCandichia (Coltc), McCallade (McChewell), McCallad (McChewell), McCallade (McChew

Publick (St Mirrer), Scriengour St Mirrer), Themson (Crystal Polace).

MONDAY's LATE RESULTS: FA Carting Premierable: Assent Il Tottenham (). Jim Schiffia
Testimonist: Motherwell 1 Wolves 2. Jois
Langue Premier Division: Grays 1 Carthallon
Athietic (). First Division: Bogror Regs 3 Serton Roters (). Second Division: Engine Regs 3 Serton Roters (). Second Division: Division: Chorley 3 Maticks 2: Guissiery 1 Ernley 1: Hyde 1
Witton (). First Division: Astron Util 1 Redetiff
Borough 1: Greet Haward 1 Workington (). Frasley Celtr 2 Homogate Town 2. Second Homes
Ledges Premier Division: Workesser () Dorchester 1. Greet Mills Lengue Premier Division:
Schuel 1 Birstol Manor Farm 2. Linglet Sesest. County Langue Fiest Division: Shoreham
1 Burges Hid (). Berth West Counties: Langue
Hirst Division: Citheron 1 Mossiey (). Poptins
Lengue Fiest Division: Entraggem Cty 1 Boron
2; Blackburn Il Newcoste 1. Second Division:
Asian Villa 3 Middleshrugh 3: Barnsky 5 Bradtors City 2: Lebesser 1 Hudders-Bird 2. Taled
Division: Carbon 1 Carsterfield (): Rochole 1
Chester 1. Arole 1 Carsterfield (): Rochole 1
Chester 2 Arole 1 Carsterfield (): Rochole 1
Chester 1 Arole 1; Forsman 1; Laton (): Birigol Roses
2 Tottenham 1; Hower (): West Hom
1 Queer's Park Ranges 3. Second Division:
Cretenham 1 Seth Cay (). Fix Youth Cop Senifinal second leg: Crystal Polace 3 Laverpool 2

SPORTING DIGEST

Nick Faldo's sturning Masters victory lifted him to fifth place in the Sony world rankings, just two weeks after slipping out of the top 10 for the first time in eight years. Leading World Rangings: 1 G No.

LEADNIN WORLD RANKINGS: 1.6 Normen (Aus) 13.80cts seg: 2.C Morrigomene (Son) 10.27; 3 N Proc (Zim) 9.33; 4 E Es (SA) 9.35; 5 N Paido (Eng) 9.00; 6 C Pawn (15) 8.65; 7 B Linger (Ger) 2.05; 8 f Couptes (US) 8.45; 9 M Ozzat Lingen) 7.13; 10 5 Elengton (Aus) 9.94; 11.7 Lehmen (US) 6.26; 12 P Micriston (US) 8.00; 12 V Sing) (Fiji 5.68; 14 S Hoch (US) 5.49; 15 S Tovance (Sco) 5.05; 16 L Janzen (US) 4.96; 17 L Roberts (US) 4.87; 13 M McCumber (US) 4.96; 19 D Lines (US) 4.81; 20 M O'Meara (US) 4.60.

Pauline Robertson, the 27-year-old midfielder who capitalns Scotland has been elected capitaln of the Atlanta Olympics British team who will play seven matches against the United States and Spain, the Olympic champions, at their training carm in Atlanta from 1A. April to 3 May. AFRICAN NATIONS CUP TOURNAMENT (Preto-fail: South Africa 6 Nambe C; Kenje 2 Egypt 2.

Rugby Union

JAPAN OPEN (Totyo) Men's singles, first roun T Suzulo (Japan) bi N Kurii (Swe) 6-3 6-1; S Ma Suppose De Principio De Princip

6-3 6-1
BERRAUDA OPEN (Pagot, Bermuda) Norts elages, first round: M Washington (US) bit Liersen
(US) 6-9 6-4: J Appl (Swe) or A Reichel (US) 26 1-5 6-4: D Dier (Sen br. (4) M. Joya (US) 6-4
7-5: N Lapertin (East br. (4) M. Joya (US) 6-4
7-5: M Titopont (Usu) br. 6 Ettis (Wg) 6-2
3-6 6-2: M Titopont (Usu) br. 6 Ettis (Wg) 6-2
3-6 6-2: A Ne (Aus) br. J Stottenberg (Pass 6-3
6-2: B Sheston (US) or O Gross (Gen 6-1 6-2: J
Frana (Arg) br. M Charpertine (Arg) 6-3 8-2. Doubless, first council. M Perriphs and M Wander (Swe)
bt. R Bergin (Swe) and S Cannon (US) 7-5 7-6.

Football

POCUDAN

POC ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION Leicester v Oldhem (7.45). Stoke v Charlion (7.45)... Tranmere v Ipswich.....

Swindow v Burnley (7.45)
Swindow v Burnley (7.45)
ICSS LEAGUE Premier Division: Harrow v Hendry, Midessy v Castrellon, Rist Distince. Abingdon Town v Tooing & Mitchem (7.45). Taird Division: Areky v Tring (7.45); Northwood v Harefield.

Also playing (not on coupons); Derby v Birro-ingham.

15 Bristol City v Oxford Utd.

16 Crewe v Rothernam

20 Stockport v York ...

17 Notts County v Burnley ...

18 Peterborough v Bristol Rovers ...

19 Shrewsbury v Brentford

W

TODAY'S FIXTURES UNIBORD LEAGUE Premier Division: Frickley v Gusseley, Pirat Didusion: Atheton v Netherfield; Farsley Cettic v Atherton LR.

mony vette: v Atherton LR.
REAZER HOMES LEARLIE Middlerd Division: Cor-by v Bedworth (7.45). Southern Division: Cir-dentert v Fareton (7.45). De Martons Cap final first leg: Baldock v Nureaton. ARRAY MILLS LEAGUE Pression Division: Frome v Tataston (7.45). Frome v Taurion (7,45).

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST League Premier Division: Astfield United v Belger Town; Denaby United v Glessinoughton Weissen.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division: Preson v Means Road.

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Prock v Durham; Exploton v Constitution of the Counties of the Constitution of the Constitution of the Constitution of the Constitution of the Counties of the Constitution of the Constitution of the Constitution of the Counties of the Constitution of the Counties of the Constitution of the Counties of the Counti

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clack-racuddin y Lossemouth; Deverorvale y Buskle Thistie; Fraserburgh y Naim County; Karth y Rojhes.

FIRST-CLASS MATCHES (first day of three): Cambridge University of Gamorgan (at Fenner's); Oxford University of Durham (at The Paris).

Rugby Union

COURAGE CLUBS' CHAN Lengue One: Leicester CLUB MATCH: Preston Grasshoppers v Wigan WELLIS CORRON SHIELD; AMIN'Y RAF (3.0) Racketball

BUDWEISER CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS Quarter-finals (second leg of three): Shelfield Sharts (1) v Worthing Beers (0) (7-30); London Leopards (1) v Menchester G

7.30 unless state PREMIER LEAGUE: Hull v Wolverhampton; Long Eston v Cradley Heath & Stoke; Poole

Other sports 90WLS: Engish Men's Indoor Championship (Melton Mowtrey)

irst Division 4 Dundes v Clydebank
S FORECAST
rision :

T CERTISERY V STERT UID	
2 Leicester v Huddersfield	.1 24 Darlington v Bury
3- Luton v Watford	1 25 Doncaster v Barnet
4 Milweil v Oldham	.1. 26 Exercity Colchester
5 Norwich v West Brom	1 27 Futham v Wigan
	.1 28 Hartlepool v Lincoln
7 Portsmouth v Barnsley	.1 29 Levton Opent v Preston
8 Reading v Charlton	2 30 Mansfield v Hereford
9 Southend v ipswich	-
10 Wolverhampton v Crystal Palece	
,,	

35 Altrincham v Hednesford 11 Blackpool v Swindon 36 Dag & Red v Rundom ... 19 Roumemouth is Welsall 37 Famborough v Telford . 13 Bradford v Chesterfield . 38 Slough v Morecambe ... 14 Brighton v Carlisia...

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division 39 Aberdeen v Hearts ... 40 Cettic v Falkirk . 41 Hilbernian v Raith 42 Kirmamock v Partick .

43 Motherwell v Rangers ...

33 Scarborough v Cambridge Utd .

34 Torquay v Chester

....2 46 Morton v St. Introstrane 47 Hamilton v Dundee Utd. 48 St Minten v Airchle... Second Division 49 Berwick v Strangaer 50 Clyde v Ayr.... 51 East Fife v Fortar .

52 Montrose v Stirting Third Division 54 Alloa v Brechin 55 Arbroath v Ross County 56 Caledonian T v Albion 57 East Statiste v Cowdenbeam

58 Queen's Park v Linngston Four draws: Gnmsby v Sheffield United, Southend United v Ipowich Town, Exeter City v Colchester United, Morton v St Johnstone. Five aways: Chariton Athletic, Crystal Palace, Hednesford, Rangers, Dundee United. Ten bornes: Lecester City, Milwall, Port Vale, Bradford City, Crowe Alexandra, Wycombe Wan-derers, Darlington, Cetuc, Dunfermitne Athleuc, East Frie.

Home rivals unite in move to isolate England

STEVE BALE

England's apparently inexorable progress out of the Five Nations' Championship was sharply accelerated yesterday when the creasingly uneasy membership changing the format of the championship. Without England. This is the combined Welsh. Scottish and Irish riposte to the

lateral decision to seek its own television deal when the current £27m Five Nations contract with the BBC runs out next home unions in combination. A March. The others turned down the RFU flat when it sought to change the present four-way Five Nations' committee - of even split to a 60 per cent which the English are in incause it had "more mouths to announced it would consider feed". Broadcasters are set to

pay at least £150m this time. If this continues, England will soon be seeking annual fix-tures with South Africa and

Spain. The ramifications could also affect the British Isles touring team, the one other institution that is governed by the severance of relations with England would make next year's tour to South Africa either implausible or impossible.

The non-English home unions - France has always made its own arrangements with French TV reached their potentially momentous decision at last Sunday's meeting in Dublin but chose to

There is another meeting, also in Of the committee will now be re-Dublin, on 27 April when another attempt at an unlikely settlement will be made.

The RFU's status as a subsidiary host union for the 1999 World Cup was excluded from yesterday's statement. "This break by England was considered wholly unacceptable by the FNC, who insist that the conduct and sale of rights, including broadcasting rights, are to retained by the committee."

"The other member unions

quested to consider the future format of the Five Nations' Championship and additionally the question of relationships at all international representative levels. The breakaway by England from the existing arrangements could have implications for British Lions tours. The other unions of the

now be obliged to reappraise the Yesterday the RFU, having on Monday refused to recognise

Five Nations' committee will

der any threat, remained disbelieving that it had come to this. The RFU secretary, Tony Hallett, launched a defence of the union's position based on the financial realities created by professionalism and the patronising supposition that the other unions would also be better off

as a result of England's opt-out. "In the new, increasingly commercial world created by the International Board, the RFU believes it has a responsibility to its constituent bodies

maximising its own TV revenue," he said. "We believe that all unions will be able to benefit from our decision and that the Five Nations will remain in-

This piece of wishful thinking makes Hallett sound as if he had never heard of the Five Nations' indignation. In any case the RFU is divided on this, as it is on how to deal with its own recalcitrant senior clubs. The union's TV stance, adopted at last Friday's meeting of the full

its Five Nations position was un- and clubs in membership for committee; is understood to than Cliff Brittle, chairman of its executive.

The Welsh would probably be in a position to go it alone too but have, with undisguised piety, resolved to stick with the less-hlessed Scots and Irisb. Yesterday the Scottish Rugby Union, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the hattle of Culloden, pleaded for a change of heart. Another English victory like that one would

Shearer injury gives Fowler Euro 96 hope

Football Correspondent

The threat of injury is as much a part of football as the ball. It strikes without regard for ahility or form, hut, though it is the scourge of the game, it can bring benefits as well as losses,

These are rarely obvious at the time hut as Terry Venables yesterday announced that Alan Shearer, his leading striker, was the latest England player to be struck down, there was a glimmer of hope. Shearer will not be available for England's Wemb-ley friendly with Croalia on Wednesday, the squad for which Venables announced yesterday, hut he may be a better player for that in Euro '96. If he plays.

Every time England go into a summer tournament, and fail, the complaint goes up that there is too much football. It is true but, since the chairman are incapable of looking beyond selfinterest, it falls to nature to intervene. Many injuries are caused by too much football, either directly, as in wear-and-tear Injuries like cartilages, or indirectly, through having inadequate time to recover between games. The silver lining is that uries iorce rest that ultimately benefits the player and his team.

Shearer has heen suffering from a groin injury for some weeks hut, with Blackburn chasing a European place, has continued playing. He has finally admitted defeat and undergoes an operation tomorrow.

"It is disappointing to miss the end of the season but, by doing what I'm doing now, my spe-cialist is confident 1 will be fit

maybe the tour" in reference to England's trip to China and Hong Kong in late May.

"It's been getting worse for the last three matches," Venables said. "He wants to get 30 goals, which is why he's playing tonight [he has 29]. He will have the op on Thursday and should be back in three to four weeks."

That Shearer is playing tonight suggests the injury is not that serious. He should, therefore, be fit by June and he will also feel rested and refreshed. That certainly applies to Ja-

son Wilcox who was one of three players enjoying the plus side of injury yesterday. Wilcox, Stan Collymore and Sol Campbell have been given the chance, through others' misfortune, to revive fledging international careers which had themselves heen interrupted by injury.

Wilcox is the latest contender to fill the void left by Darren Anderton, another injury victim. Anderton, who made a significant step in his return from injury when he came on for Tottenbam on Monday, was injured in the autumn. Wilcox has been missing since last March but may be returning just in time.

His importance to Blackburn was best illustrated by their lack of halance without him. It is his first appearance in a full squad but he played well for the B team last season.

Collymore played twice without distinction during last summer's Umhro Cup then lost his place with both England and Liverpool after suffering an ankle injury in August. He has since struck up an excellent partnership with Rohbie Fowler. cialist is confident 1 will be fit for Euro 96," he said. At which point Venables added "and Fowler is the more likely starter.

for the abandoned match in Dublin 14 months ago, before dropping out with injury. He took time to rediscover his form at Tottenham but is now playing well. A versatile player he has made a timely return to the centre-half berth. At present, Tony Adams, Gary Pallister, Steve Howey and Gareth

Southgate are all injured.

All hope to be fit for Euro 96 though Adams broke down in training yesterday - but first Campbell, or Ugo Ehiogu, have the chance to stake a claim. They should certainly get the opportunity to show their mettle. Croatia can choose from Davor Suker, Zvonimir Boban, Alen Boksic and Robert Prosinecki. Against such opposition Mark Wright's experience is likely to be used. "I expect them to be one of the favourites in the summer. They were the better side in two games against Italy," Venables said.

There is every indication that Croatia, unlike some of England's recent visitors, will be taking the game seriously. Whether the attendance will reflect this is yet to be seen. Though admission prices are expected to be reviewed for the May fixture against Hungary they remain high for this game. Wemhley is thus expected to be half-empty - or, as an FA spokesman

might say, "half-full". HIGH SBY, "HALI-IUII ENCLAND SQUAD by Crossis, Westking, 24 Aprill:
Seasure (Arseno), Flowers (Bacthurn), Wester (Interdent); Glewille (Man Ltd.), Jores (Livespool, Corespool, Corter harn), Wester (Man Ltd.), Jores (Livespool, Carephol, Glerichern), Wild, Peerce (Notim Forest), Phoville (Man Utd.), Lea (Newcestle), Ince (Internationals), Saucologiae (Rangers), Phot (Arsenot), Wilson (Gledchurn), Stones (Notim Forest), Stocials (QFR), Collymane (Livespool), Storeingisma (Totterhunt), Foreier (Livespool), Storeingisma (Totterhunt), Foreier (Livespool), Storeingisma (Totterhunt), Foreier (Livespool), Storeingisma (Newcastle), McManageam (Livespool), Storeingisma

Premiership race, page 29

Football frenzy in the coun-

Strange, contrary idea of being fighting-fit (5,3,6)
Living in the sea makes old

Upright individual in High Street? (6)

Unfit condition? Massages lessen rash best (14) 16 Adler and Jung, for exam-ple, reported as record-

Country with diamonds to

17 Breaking law in opening stout? (8)

sailor weaken (9) Naughty kids run from wriggly young things (5) High tar alarm? I'd reform!

Eric Owens, of the Cincinatti Reds, slides and steals third under the tag of Houston Astros' Sean Berry

Francis puts Anderton in frame

lected for England's week with Croatia, but his Tottenham manager, Gerry Francis, has told Terry Venables: "He could still be your man for Euro 96."

Francis plunged substitute Anderton into the last 12 minutes of a typically frenetic North London derby against Arsenal at Highbury on Monday night - his first senior appearance since September following two serious groin operations - and said: "Now I want him to play in all our last three Premier

League games against Chelsea, Leeds and Newcastle. "It is a tremendous thing for him, and I think tremendous for England as well, that he's had this 12 or 13 minutes and come through it. Darren has been through a very had time, a very frustrating time, hut he's back and that is great news. I spoke to Terry Venables about him after the Arsenal game and told

him my plans now for Darren. "Terry can't pick him for the squad against Croatia hut Dar-

Darren Anderton was not se- ren will have a full game in the much but I felt OK and if things twice hlaze over the bar when reserves on inursuay and hopefully, another 90 minutes in a testimonial match at West Ham on Saturday.

"Then I'll be looking to play him in the three League games and Terry will have the opportunity to assess him for the European Championships.

"He doesn't have to name his squad until the end of May and so there is time still for Darren to get his match-fitness completely right. Obviously it is up to Terry after that, but he knows Darren as well as I do and he's a player who can do things that

other players cannot do. Francis decided to take his gamble on Anderton after Dean Austin and Andy Sinton were forced out of the squad for the Arsenal game by injuries. Anderton said: "Until yesterday morning 1 thought 1 was

going to play in another reserve game, hut then Gerry told me I was on the bench instead for the first team and it was great to be back - and to get on.

"Twelve minutes isn't very

I'm all right for the games against Chelsea, Leeds and Newcastle. I haven't even dared think about the England thing yet, hut if it comes along then I obviously wouldn't say no."

Venahles was among a 38,000-plus Highbury crowd to watch a passionate but goalless draw which left Arsenal still in pole position for a Uefa Cup place next season - two points ahead of sixth-placed Spurs, with three game apiece to play.

But the Gunners, who nov face a trip to Blackburn a week on Saturday followed by home games with Liverpool and Bolton, could yet rue their failure to take first-half chances and go clear of the pack.

Blackburn, boosted by recent victories over Newcastle and Nottingham Forest, are still strongly in the hunt. They will be also be just a point behind Arsenal if they beat Wimbledon at Ewood Park tomorrow.

Bruce Rioch, the Arsenal manager, saw Paul Merson

erdiy set u Bergkamp and later Ray Parlour. Rioch, who then watched Nigel Winterburn miss from eight yards, said: "We had the momentum at that stage and should have converted at least one of our opportunities.

"But I don't consider h two points dropped. Spurs had a good chance themselves through Chris Armstrong in the second half and it was remarkable really that there were no goals to show at the end."

In a match of thundering commitment hut variable qual ity, honours were deservedly shared - allowing Francis to maintain his five-year unbeatenrecord, as manager of both QPR warr

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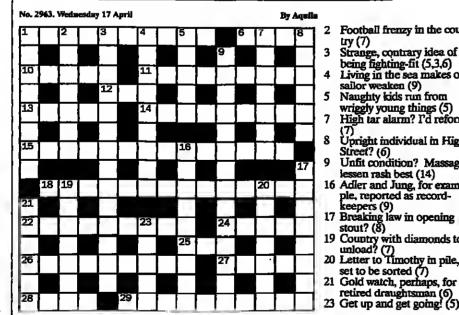
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and Spurs, against Arsenal.
He admitted: "It was not quite the result we wanted and it will be very difficult for us to get into Europe. But two points is nothing even with three games to play and I believe it will still go right to the wire for a Uefa Cup place. We have three hard games left hut so do Arsenal.":

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD





- ACROSS
- City's home fixture (4)
- 11 Organ many upset as mem-ber of guild? (9) 12 Short tenor at party? Full
- stop! (3)
 13 Rawboned type has some painful ankylosis (5) 14 They would be well-in-
- formed, knowing races can be fixed (9) 15 Pompous riparian had to fall to do a turn (4,2,4,4)
- 18 Pluto alignment brings con-22 Kind of roll, (A-E, etc)? (9) 24 Lighter tumble (5) 25 Popular name for a pub (3)
- parallel things (9) Extremely wide, possibly

26 Watches traditionally show

28 This hird dead, with nothing to follow? You can say that again! (4)

29 Enduring variety of pretti-

1 Craft gift? (8)



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Wednesday want offers for cut-price Waddle

has refused a one-year deal at Sheffield Wednesday.

The 35-year-old former Newcastle, Tottenham and Marseille winger, will be available for £250,000. He said Wednesday's manager, David Pleat, had made it clear that he was "no longer regarded as a regular in the team."

"I want to be either playing regularly or doing a job as a player-coach or as a player-manager, so we agreed it would be best if I was made available."

Waddle has been on the hench for the last three Wednesday matches hut his last start was at Aston Villa on 6 March.

Waddle's former Tottenham cohort, Glenn Hoddle, will also need a new contract at the end of next month. The Chelsea manager meets his club chairman, Ken Bates, and his boardroom_colleagues_tomorrow after Chelsea's Premiership trip

to Sheffield Wednesday. "It's not about my contract hut about how the club is going

Chris Waddle, who will be a free agent at the end of the season, to be run. Hopefully it's going to be positive," Hoddle said. "I need to know exactly what's going on and it has taken a hell of a long time to get this meeting to fruition.

Chelsea players have encouraged Hoddle to stay and finish the job at Stamford Bridge where Bates took the holding company, Chelsea Vil-lage, on to the Alternative Investment Market recently. Supporters keep saying to

me, 'Why haven't you signed your contract?'. But they don't understand the issues which have got to be sorted out from the top level. We need some direction. "At the moment I'd be a fool

to put pen to paper and commit other people's livelihoods as well. I saw what happened at Tottenham when they first went public and it was frightening. 1 don't think it's all rosy and there are a lot of things that need to be talked about and sorted out."

Miliwall's manager, Jimmy Nicholl, could return to firstteam football at the age of 39. Nicholl, who last played in the English league 10 years ago, is

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contemplating playing Millwall's critical relegation game at home against Oldham on Saturday.

The former Northern Ireland full-back played for his former cluh, Raith Rovers, this season hut his last English League game was for West Bromwich Albion in a 5-0 defeat at Tottenham on 8 March 1986.

The new Millwall manager who played a full reserve match against Brighton on Monday, has four defenders suspended and Damien Webber is also in-

The Football Association has commended police and stew ards at Highbury for their swift action in quelling ugly scenes in Arsenal's Clock End stand after Monday's north London derby against Tottenham.

Thirteen arrests were made after rival fans hurled missiles. including bottles and broken seats, but the FA will not be taking any action.

Dumharton, doomed to relegation to the Scottish Second Division, are up for sale. The move follows the resignation yesterday of three directors.

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